

# INTEGRITY



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SUBJECT ~ EDUCATION

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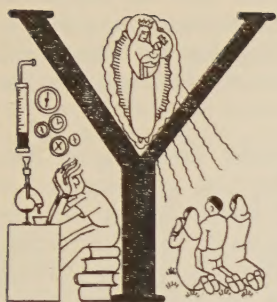
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## EDITORIAL



YOU will find our leading article (OUR LADY OF WISDOM) hard going the first time you read it through. It's written simply enough, but it's the deep, deep view of a situation we tend to regard superficially. It shows the connection between religion and education ultimately to rest on whether or not we accept the light God wants to give to our minds. If we don't accept it, and modern man has not accepted it, we eventually come out with a curriculum diametrically opposed to the truth. We are in that stage today, when learning which has long since ceased to be for Christ is ever more blatantly against Him. But the evil is not corrected by substituting good information for bad information. The situation has to be corrected radically, which means that we have to overcome our spiritual blindness. When, through Mary, we obtain the humility by which we shall regain the light God has withdrawn from our intellects, then we shall know the truth.

Compared to spiritual blindness, all our other educational ills are minor, even though manifold. Little effort has been made to treat them comprehensively.

We had to point out, because nobody else has (curious fact!) that higher salaries are irrelevant to the teacher-shortage, or rather that money acts as a palliative to a more profound discontent. LIFE IN AN EDUCATION FACTORY shows why, from personal experience.

Personal experience serves also to press home the case against secular education. Wellesley, our bad example, is not essentially different from other private colleges, except that it has had for years a religion course similar to that which is planned for similar schools. This teaching of religion will, so they say, turn the tide of irreligion. How little they know!

Lastly, we have a lay view of the problem of theology for the laity.

In deference to the full expression of our writers in this issue we have, for this once, reduced the size of our type. We shall revert to the old size next month.

THE EDITORS.

# Our Lady of Wisdom\*

You may have noticed this strange coincidence, how modern writers at the one extreme, and St. John the Evangelist at the other, are both very much concerned with beginnings? The Evangelist solved the problem quite simply, with the help of revelation, writing: "In the beginning was the Word," this right at the beginning of his gospel. In my classes I solve it by a prayer before and after each class, a prayer to Our Blessed Mother.

To an outsider this might seem like an empty formality, something one does in a Catholic university. But, as I understand it, it is the most important part of our class. And that is why I am trying, here, to start in something like the same way. This is the way I understand praying before passing on to formal instruction, in the classroom or in the lecture hall: there are three elements in every teaching situation, the doctrine taught, the one teaching, and the one being taught. If what is taught is true, it comes from God, it is a participation in the Being of Him Who is Subsistent Truth. If I am to teach what is true, I must first be moved by that Truth Which is God. If you are to learn that Truth, you must be disposed by God to receive it. In the words of St. Paul, *When one of you says, I am for Paul, and another, I am for Apollos, are not these human thoughts? Why, what is Apollos, what is Paul? Only the ministers of the God in whom your faith rests, who have brought that faith to each of you in the measure God granted. It was for me to plant the seed, for Apollos to water it, but it was God who gave the increase. And if so, the man who plants, the man who waters, counts for nothing; God is everything, since it is He Who gives the increase.*

You and I, then, by the teaching of our holy Faith, and even by the natural testimony of God (Who may be known by natural reason, to those, that is, who seek to know Him), you and I cannot hope to learn anything which is true, particularly as it is a living truth, except we learn it as we are the instruments of God, united in the holiness of Truth, and seeing one another in the likeness of Jesus Christ, Who is Subsistent Truth. Adapting the words of St. Paul to what is happening here, I say the words, you listen to them, but it is God Who will give the increase. And He will give it in the measure of that love by which I would communicate His truth, and your love by which you receive it.

That, as I conceive, is the meaning of prayer as it is the fitting introduction to learning. And therefore I must beg you to pray that, as we are united in Christ here, in the bond of His Charity, we may together learn something of His Truth.

And now, dwelling on this relation of love as it is found in Christian teaching, pondering the Master's exhortation, "Wherever two or three, or more are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," I see, in a way, that I have already spoken the very substance of all I would say to you.

## He Who is Not With Me

For what I had intended to say was this, that Christian learning is holy, because it has its beginning and its end, Alpha and Omega, in God through

\* This Lecture was given to the Newman Club of Brown University, Jan. 10, 1947.



Jesus Christ. (That, incidentally, is why we pray at the end of class as well as at the beginning.) Whereas any learning that is not Christian is not holy. Neither is it indifferent—here I am afraid I must say something which will shock some of you. But Our Lord, Who is God, has said it: "He who is not with me, is against me." If, then, our learning and our teaching are not in Christ, they are against Him, and, by that fact, they are against God. Teaching which is not in Christ and with Him, and for Him, is the teaching of the devil, because all teaching which is against Him comes from that father of lies, whose end is to seduce souls as it is Our Lord's end to save them.

That is how souls are lost, too, through false doctrine. For men are not mere lumps of matter, or unreasoning brutes. Men are free agents, and they are free just in this, that their appetites must be moved by their reason: that, in fact, is what we mean by being free, free to act for the good *which we understand to be our good*. (The consummation of our free choice, for that reason too, is in making the right choice, binding ourselves to the One Infinite Good, not in being free to make the choice because we always postpone it—as current talk about freedom might lead one to believe. But that is another story, and for another time.) Because men are free, then, they can be brought to God, or kept from Him, only by doctrine, that is, by teaching, rational persuasion.

All doctrine, therefore, is either for Christ, or against Him, all doctrine is ordered either to save souls, or to destroy them. Nothing, not a single proposition is indifferent to our supernatural end. This truth, which is as old as our Faith, I should like to characterize by a new name, this is CATHOLIC PRAGMATISM. And if, as I am convinced—and I think you will agree with me—Catholic thought today does not have the vitality it should have, if it is scandalously true that those whose convictions are contrary to our Faith are more fruitful, shamefully more fruitful than ourselves, it is because they, in their error, have shown an integral purposefulness, where we (like the Jews in a similar situation) have grown content to eat out of the flesh-pots of their culture, serving the enemies of God with our minds as we try to serve the same God with our hearts. This is a terrible wound, not a bleeding gash, so easily seen, which heals as quickly as it is treated, but a slow and furtive, life-consuming cancer which, when it is recognized, has virtually finished its horrible work.

And so I speak to you as men dying of this vicious disease, hoping you will listen even though you have not yet, perhaps, felt the fatal symptoms—even more—just because you have not felt them, because by that time it will be too late: the disease will have destroyed you. You can see now how important my preliminary exhortation was. For here, at the very crucial point of our communication, I must beg you to judge what I am saying, not by the light of your own senses, but by the testimony of the Holy Spirit, even in defiance of your own understanding, as faith animated by love sometimes makes necessary. I exhort you to turn to that Spirit within yourselves, and ask: Is it true, then, that all that I have learned which was not for Christ, is against Him? Is it true that, by my very "education," I am today a house divided, one of whom the Spirit of God wrote: "I know of thy doings, and find thee neither hot nor cold, cold nor hot, I would thou wert one or the other. Being what thou are, lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, thou wilt make me vomit thee out of my mouth?"

## Legion of the Lukewarm

Notice, the Holy Spirit says that we *make* God vomit us out by our lukewarmness. Why do you think that is? Why should God tell us that He would prefer us to be cold rather than lukewarm? Certainly He does not want us to sin. The answer is to be found in the words of Jesus, when He told the Pharisees: "I came to save sinners." Did He mean He had not come to save all men, even the Pharisees? Certainly the Mercy of God is for all. But observe the occasion of this utterance. He says this to the Pharisees when they are scandalized because He associates with sinners.

Why were they scandalized? Because they regarded themselves just men. But if they were made just by God, why could not that same God make other sinners just? Therefore they looked upon themselves as just, not as sinners made just by God, but as men who had justified themselves without God. And those were the men He could not save, those whose hearts were so hardened by hypocrisy that they could not even so much as think that they needed to be redeemed. But Christ could save sinners like Magdalen, like Matthew, like Peter, — because, through their sin, they knew that they needed to be saved, that they could do nothing without God. And God saves all who ask to be saved, those ask who are not smug in their own virtues.

The lukewarm, who are neither cold nor hot, then, are those who are abandoned neither to God nor to sin. Instead, they keep up just enough of external observance to prevent themselves from being disturbed by their sins, enough to destroy the knowledge of their poverty—by which God calls them to Himself.

The world today is made up pretty much of those who are lukewarm, who are, as they think, neither very much for Christ, nor very much against Him. Particularly among the educated, so-called, the leaders of society. And He is ready to vomit them out of His mouth. These are the men who cry "peace, peace, and there is no peace." Why is there no peace? they ask. They are truly puzzled. Are we not men of good will, all seeking peace? Why then is there no peace? What more could we do to bring about this peace? Listen very carefully to the answer of God, as He speaks in the hatred and war that surround us: IF YOU SAY THAT YOU ARE MEN OF GOOD WILL, SEEKING PEACE, YET YOU FIND NO PEACE, WHAT DOES THAT MAKE OF ME? DO YOU NOT SAY, IN THESE VERY WORDS, THAT I AM A MONSTER WHO, WHEN HIS SON ASKS FOR BREAD, HAND HIM A STONE. HYPOCRITES THAT YOU ARE, WHY DO YOU NOT LOOK INTO YOUR OWN HEARTS, TO ACCUSE YOURSELVES, BEFORE YOU ACCUSE YOUR GOD? BUT, RATHER THAN ACCUSE YOURSELVES, YOU WILL DENY MY VERY MERCY, THE MOST PRECIOUS OF ALL MY ATTRIBUTES, TO SHOW YOU WHICH I SUFFERED EVERY CONCEIVABLE SUFFERING. AT LEAST, THEN, CONFESS TO YOURSELVES AND TO ME THAT YOU DO NOT SEEK PEACE. THEN ASK ME, IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR OWN POVERTY, AND I WILL GIVE YOU PEACE—BECAUSE I WILL GIVE YOU MYSELF.

Yes, it is a fact, as all of us who have tried just a little to love God must know, it is a fact that we cannot love Him of ourselves. This is the knowledge, the reward He gives us when we begin to try to love Him, the knowledge of our



abysmal pride and hypocrisy, by which we would not hesitate to use anything to glorify ourselves. What, then, is this strange convention which overwhelms us, by which we assume that we can be men of good will without God, without Christ? Why are we so afraid of our own weakness, we who are the children of a God Who brought us back from the dead? For surely we are afraid to admit our culpability for fear of the punishment.

### What Is a Neurotic?

Our age, we are told, is "neurotic." There is much talk about the devastating tempo of our lives, and our common language is filled with the terms of psychiatry. But what is the trouble, in the simplest terms? The psychiatrists know very well. They call it by different names, inferiority complex, guilt complex, Oedipus complex, always a complex. But the thing they name is one and the same. Do you know what it is?

Why is it, whatever else it may be called, always a complex? Because it is complicated, not simple; a complex, not a simplex. St. Paul had a "complex" once too. That was what God told him when He said: "Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me? . . . I am Jesus, whom Saul persecutes. This is a thankless task of thine, kicking against the goad." Having a complex is kicking against the goad, seeking peace by violating our consciences. Yes, having a "complex," in the language of earlier times, when men used to call things by their right names, is being a liar. But being a liar is a very different thing from telling a lie. For when we tell a lie, merely, we know that we are lying with perfect objectivity. But when we become habitual liars, we not only lie about this or that, we lie about ourselves: we tell ourselves we are not liars. That is the genesis of the *complex*, and we all have complexes because we are all liars about ourselves: we tell ourselves, and we assume with one another, that we are truthful men. Yet we know, at the bottom of our hearts, unless those hearts are utterly hardened, that we are not truthful. And, because we make ourselves out honest and truthful, we make God Himself a liar. That is the hypocrisy that God Himself cannot convert to Himself — because it denies God, because it denies His Mercy.

And so the psychiatrists tell us about our complexes, but they do not tell us that we are liars. That would be crude, and they could hardly expect persons to pay for being told that. And the truth is (in defense of the psychiatrists) that, if they did tell them, their patients would not believe it. Because they really are complicated. Being complicated, they don't know, very clearly, that is, that they are liars. And so it wouldn't do very much good to tell them. It might do a lot of harm in fact.

The reason is that lying is more an effect than a cause. No one wants to be a liar, really. No one wants anything bad as such. For example, take a more shocking kind of sin, say murder. No one murders simply for the sake of destroying a human life. Why in the world would anyone want to destroy life for its own sake? (That is a terrible habit moderns have fallen into, to conceive sin as though it were desirable for its own sake.) But the truth is that, when we sin, it is always because we want some good. The man who murders does not will death for itself; he wants the money of the man he is going to kill, or the satisfaction to his wounded pride, or something else, but he wants something positive: death is simply a way of getting it—chosen, probably, because

the murderer is too stupid to get what he wants in a less drastic way, or to change what he wants. And so with lying. You lie when you tell men, or yourself, something contrary to what you know to be the truth. But you don't deprive your neighbor, or yourself, of the truth for its own sake. That would be like wanting death just because it was nothing. But when we are tempted to want to die, it is to avoid the suffering which, we are persuaded, life is going to entail. We just can't want nothing. We have to want something, and lying is a kind of nothing, the lack of something, the lack of truth.

### Why Do We Lie?

Why, then, do we lie—to ourselves, to one another and to God, about ourselves, saying that we keep the commandments of God, which are written in the heart of every man of good will, by ourselves? For it is a fact that we are unable of ourselves, to keep those commandments. Here is what St. Paul tells us about the matter: "No human creature can become acceptable in God's sight by observing the law; what the law does is to give us the full consciousness of sin." And a little later he adds: "The effect of the law is only to bring God's displeasure upon us; it is only where there is a law that transgression becomes possible." That is why we are all suffering from complexes: we tell ourselves and one another that we *can* keep the law, that we *are* in fact keeping it, *of ourselves*, not by the Faith God gave us and sustains, not by His grace, but of ourselves. And all the time we know it isn't really true. We are in fact quite afraid to look and see what hideous monsters we are without this grace of God. And so, like a sort of family skeleton (only this is one we carry around with us) we assume that it does not exist, locked in the closet of a social convention.

The reason we tell lies, then, is because we are afraid, afraid of the truth, the truth of what we are in ourselves. But why should we be afraid of that truth, even if it is true that we are sinners? Certainly truth in itself is a good, and we would not turn from it as from a good thing. We turn from the truth of our own evil, therefore, only because we are persuaded, somehow, that a greater evil will attack us if we face and acknowledge the present one. We are afraid of despair—because despair is really the worst thing there is. We don't want to go about overwhelmed by our own hopelessness, and the hopelessness of everyone else. And neither does God want us to. That is what poor Judas was doing just before he hung himself. Because he saw the terrible thing he had done. Only there was something terribly wrong in the way he saw it. He saw the evil in himself, but he wasn't prepared to see it. He couldn't take it, *because he had not seen the Mercy of God*, that God's Mercy, great as the sin was, was infinitely greater than that sin. And so he damned himself by trying to pay back his debt to God with his own life, that is, alas! by taking something else away from God, his own life now, in addition to God's life.

That is why we all have complexes, then, because we are afraid to face the truth of our own weakness and malice, and we are afraid to face these because we think we shall be despondent if we see ourselves as we really are. And the point I want to make is that we are entirely right—except for one thing, the Mercy of God, a Mercy, be it remembered too, Which will not permit us to see more than we can bear. For that too would be pride, to want to know our evil more than God would wish us to know it.



Because God is omnipotent, everything whatsoever is under His dominion, including our own acts. Why, then, does He permit sin? He tells us Himself, when Simon, the Pharisee, doubts Him because He had accepted the solicitude of Mary Magdalen: *I came into thy house, and thou gavest me not water for my feet, she has washed my feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair. Thou gavest me no kiss of greeting, she has never ceased to kiss my feet since I entered, thou didst not pour oil on my head, she has anointed my feet, and with ointment. And so I tell thee, if great sins have been forgiven her, she has also greatly loved. He loves little, who has little forgiven him.*

"He loves little, who has little forgiven him." That is the answer of Jesus Christ, to those who ask why He permits sin. He permits it, having paid for it with His Own Precious Blood, in order to forgive it, because He knows the secrets of the human heart, how forgiveness moves it to love, and the more the forgiveness, the greater the love.

### **Mary and the Mercy of God**

But we have not yet come to the end of our query. This is where we stand, now: we have all sorts of complexes because we are liars about ourselves: we are liars because we are afraid to face the truth about ourselves, we are afraid to face the truth, the fact of our malice, because we do not understand the Mercy of God, how He came to save sinners, not to despise them and to cast them out, how He permits sin as the instrument of His loving Mercy, whereby He teaches us to love Him more, loving Him from the abyss of our own ugliness.

And now we ask: But why do we not understand this Mercy of God? The Spirit of God answers us: Because "wisdom will not enter a malicious heart, nor dwell in a body subject to sin." For this is wisdom, to know peace in the knowledge that God has forgiven us much and therefore we love much. Wisdom is to hope in this Mercy, as foolishness is to hope in ourselves, knowing our own weakness. Therefore, we do not understand the Mercy of God because we are conceived in sin, brought forth in iniquities by a mother herself conceived in sin.

We cannot understand the Mercy of God because it is a gift, utterly for nothing. The prophet calls to us: "All ye who are without money, come and buy." What God gives cannot be purchased by our goods, by our good acts, our good thoughts, it can be had only for nothing, it is only for the beggars, for the poor, the poor in spirit, for those who know their nothingness—and who know that this too is a gift, the knowledge that they have nothing to give. "All ye who are without money, come and buy." "Blessed are the poor in spirit, the kingdom of heaven is theirs."

But why can we not understand this wonderful gift of God, His Mercy? We have said, because we were conceived in sin. Being conceived in sin, our conceptions are warped. We cannot conceive of a Being Who is Infinitely Powerful giving so great a gift to creatures on whom He depends not at all, from whom He has nothing, absolutely nothing, to gain. And the reason we cannot conceive this Mercy, is that we should never, of ourselves, give a great gift to one who could give us nothing in return. For as we are, so do we judge: being ourselves without mercy, we cannot conceive a God Who is all Mercy. If we know ourselves only a very little bit, we know how, day and night, we plot schemes to gain for ourselves, to glorify ourselves, to devour those weaker than ourselves,

often hiding our own hardness from ourselves by hypocritical disguises of charity and benevolence. How can we hope, then? How can we hope in the Mercy of God, without which we are lost, unless we can believe in it, hard and unmerciful as we are?

This is what Jesus told Nicodemus, when he came to praise His teachings as coming from God: "Believe me when I tell thee this; a man cannot see the kingdom of God without being born anew." This seems a strange thing for Christ to be telling a person who acknowledges that His teaching is from God, that He is from God. But Nicodemus had been persuaded through miracles, and Jesus wanted him to know that flesh and blood had not revealed this thing to him. For, if he had been persuaded through miracles that Jesus was from God, why would he not be persuaded by his defeat and death on the Cross, that He was not from God, and that He was not God? Nicodemus was puzzled. "How is it possible," he asked, "that a man should be born when he is already old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and so come to birth?" It was then that Jesus spoke the words establishing the Sacrament of Baptism: "Believe me, no man can enter the kingdom of God unless birth comes to him from water, and from the Holy Spirit."

Many, many centuries later, when the Blessed Virgin had appeared to a little girl in the south of France, the local priest, acting within his rights, indeed by his duty, told the little girl, Bernadette Soubirous, to ask "The Lady" what her name was. Because She was a true Lady, Our Blessed Mother was not offended. It was then, as many of you know, that She announced Her Name: "I am the Immaculate Conception."

### **Mary Helps Us to be Simple**

Here, then, is the answer to our question, and the end of our quest. We are born again, really and truly born again, in a spiritual generation, of water and the Holy Spirit. This is our vocation, to be other Christs, parts of that first Christ, together with Him constituting that "divine generation" which Isaiah had prophesied: "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son." Mary is not only the Mother of Jesus, then, She is the Mother of that whole generation which is one with Jesus. We are born again, by the Sacrament of Baptism, of water and of the Holy Spirit. But, as we learn from the lips of our dying Savior, we are the children of His Mother, we are born again of Mary and the Holy Spirit, as the First Christ was born of Her and of the Holy Spirit. We are "a nation brought forth at once, because Sion (Our Blessed Mother) hath been in labour," in labour at the foot of the Cross where She brought forth all the Elect. We are, therefore, gods, born of God, and of the Mother of God.

Mary, then, is that Immaculate Conception in Whom alone we can see the Mercy of God, in Whom we can become wise, being, mystically, in a body not subject to sin. In Mary, the Mother of Mercy, we can know God's Mercy, as we become one with Her First-born. In Mary we are not afraid of our sins because we know, without guile, that the death of sin has been effected by Our Lord's death, that death no longer has its sting, that death has died. In Mary we are not afraid to hope, because our hope is in Her and not in ourselves; we are not afraid to look at our sins, because, hideous as those sins are, our hope is not in our own virtue. Indeed we rejoice in our weakness, because, through it, we



become more attached to Our Lord in His Blessed Mother. In Mary we have confidence that we can overcome all things, because the simplicity of the child wins the kingdom of heaven, and Mary's love, Her strength, makes us children again, burdened down as we may be by our transgressions. Therefore we "run after Her," imitating Her virtues, seeing the blackness of our vices as the background which God has permitted to show forth the wonderful Purity of Our Lady. In Her, therefore, we hate our sins as we strive valiantly to overcome them; but neither do we permit them to overcome us, to take away that joyful hope which God gives in its fulness to Mary's children. If we see ourselves as worse than we had thought, we strive to love Mary more than we had before, we hate ourselves that much more, but not with a bitter hatred, the hatred which is born of a secret fear of evil, and undue fear, but with the hatred which is one with the love of Our Mother.

Therefore, in this new Mother, God has removed the whole principle of our prideful duplicity. For we no longer are afraid to see ourselves as we are, for fear, that is, of despair. We rejoice, even, to see them in order to have the greater motive to love Her, and Her Son in Her. And thus, little by little, Mary makes us uncomplicated, makes us simple as She is simple, makes us mistrustful of ourselves as we become more and more trustful of Her, and of God. Thus we learn, as we learn to love Her more, to love more and more too the Darkness which is the Light of God, dark to us only because it shines in the darkness. Thus too we realize that our intellectual vocation is to be one with God, through love, in this life, as we shall be one with Him forever in the next, not only with that same love which never passes away, but with a light of glory by which we shall know God as He knows us. Then Wisdom will laugh at the devils and the human enemies of God, laughing them to scorn, showing them how all their machinations only helped God to form His Saints.

And already we can hear, as from far off, the voice of that laughter. For did not the prince of this world try to seduce us from the arms of God, telling us that this was the true re-birth, the "renaissance," that we should be born again, liberated from the darkness of our Faith, and brought into the light of human wisdom, of that true infinite perfection, which is progress without end. Did he not seduce our forefathers as he seduced our first parents, with the promise that we should be as gods, this as the reward of disobedience to God? For Lucifer, the light-bearer, can seduce us only through our pride, as Mary saves us through humility. And now, have we not learned, and shall we not learn more and more how much God loves us, through the very instrument of this diabolical trickery? For, having seen, by it, the horrible depths of our uncleanness, we are prepared now to love Our Mother, the Immaculate Conception, knowing how unspeakably wide the gulf is which separates us from Her, so that only the arm of Her Mercy can stretch across it, as She softly calls to us, again and again: "Come over to me all ye that desire me," "Come over to me all ye that desire me, and be filled with my fruits."

### **Contemporary Education in the Light of Mary's Wisdom**

Thus Mary, Our Holy Mother, is the Principle of our life and of our culture. She is God's answer to the malice of the devil which would steal away Her children. In Her we shall see more and more clearly the vicious sophisms of contemporary learning, as we become more and more perfectly united with Her Son. In Her, too, we shall learn to despise all learning which is not

ordered to God—not merely, as the prince of darkness loves to insinuate, by giving up the truths of the natural order, the very contrary, for, as that terrible liar shall have to hear for all eternity, only we who are the children of Mary, and the children, therefore, of God the Father, are truly solicitous to keep intact the truths of natural reason. Because we know, as that father of all lies knows, that only we have a real concern for those truths, because the things of heaven are made manifest by the things of nature, by the things which we see in the light of natural reason. Whereas he, the irreconcilable enemy of God, must distort those truths as long as he is able, to hide from poor sinners the things of God which are manifested in them.

And so this new age on which we are entering, the age of Mary, should be a time of great rejoicing for the taking of new hope by Mary's children—for all the devastation which surrounds us. It has been promised to us, and already we see the beginning of its fulfillment, how the monster of pernicious doctrine will necessarily fall, by the hand of Our Mother, by Her Who "alone has overcome all heresies." But as the archer needs arrows to kill his quarry, so Our Lady and Her Son need us, to dedicate ourselves to Her Purity, that we may become "as arrows in the hands of the mighty." Everything is poised, now, the whole universe is hushed as it was in that wonderful time when the Angel Gabriel came to Mary with his sublime message. The fate of the whole world was in the balance—until those pure lips uttered their heavenly "Fiat," "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word." And now, once again, the Angel of the Lord comes, to each one of us, asking for our assent, that the Son of God may be born in us, that we may be born again, of Mary and the Holy Spirit. For Mary is God's answer to the problem of Catholic education; Mary is the Educator by Whom we are conformed to Jesus Christ so that we may judge all things as He judges them. What do you say? O, that your answer might be, "Behold the servant of the Lord; be it done unto me according to thy word!"

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Catholic universities  
 Have a few perversities  
 Like Accreditation  
 Of Catholic education.



## Commencement Address for a Catholic College

Now close your book of yesterdays  
And set sweet childhood by.  
Tomorrow will be no more dreams.  
The storm rides down the sky.

We shall not speak of life's bright dawn  
But rather how the night  
Comes on too soon with fearful breath  
Whispering there is no light.

Yes, though we lit you wisdom's lamp  
And spoke of learned things,  
Now you shall walk like foolish men  
And rule as outcast kings.

Oh you must walk like stupid men  
Babbling an outworn creed.  
We pray now that you seek to fail  
Who taught you to succeed.

Beware when men shall praise your works  
And bid you to their feast.  
The world loves whom the world does love  
But who loves God is least.

For every man must sometime find  
Within his bitter youth  
Our single tragic triumph is  
To live, not learn, the truth.

So take the fair words from our lips  
And break them in earth's strife.  
See if there be the strength in you  
To bear a broken life.

And wisdom that we could not give  
Shall come to you through tears  
In fear and pain and loneliness  
Years upon fruitless years.

Then fare you forth from our safe walls,  
Your splendor be your loss!  
Your hands that tremble touching joy  
Be iron upon the Cross!

*Elizabeth Odell*

# Life in an Education Factory

It was 1934. The graduates of the classes that had entered college in the depression years of 1929 and 1930 were busy getting jobs as secretaries, switch-board operators, Macy salesmen and saleswomen, and entering fields of work that were not even securely "white-collar." The A.B. that the graduate had won, often at great personal sacrifice and because of the forbearance and help of struggling families, did not even serve the primary purpose for which it had been achieved—it did not lift its owner into a higher social and economic class. Even if the A.B. owner's family had already achieved the stability of belonging to the social and economic stratum where the possession of a college degree was customary and correct, the graduate often had to slip down a cog or two, both in the wage and society scale.

In New York, large numbers of the young women who became A.B.'s in those glum classes of '33 or '34, were only drawn into the economic system by virtue of the fact that so many others were in misery—they became part of the mechanism for the mass production of the works of mercy through serving as investigators for the City Department of Public Welfare.

The goal of most of these young women seemed to be something higher, finer, more rewarding, more secure (think of the promise of *life tenure* in the uncertain and lean days of 1933), more intellectual, more socially acceptable—the goal of Teaching in the Great High School System of the City of New York. The pay was about \$2,200 yearly for a beginner, with a long summer vacation and a six-hour and twenty-minute day within the school walls. Though there were thousands upon thousands of candidates for these splendid positions, there were few places. It was a lucky girl who could manage to get one of these places even after a grueling and exacting series of tests. Even after passing the tests, it was often necessary to wait for years for an "appointment" to a position, since there were for most subjects, long lists of candidates who were appointed in order of grades received in the teachers' examination.

I was one of the searchers after security in those days of 1934. I was one of the few who, having passed the required examination, received an immediate appointment as a high school teacher. My friends told me, many a little sadly because they were still chained to Macy's, how really fortunate I was. I began to think so myself. I had not long returned from a short visit to Europe, and I had seen the terrible, hopeless plight of miners, and industrial workers in urban centers, who had been out of work, or existing on part-time work, for several years. The drabness of their lives, and the corrosive effects of long idleness on the character of the men, had shaken me so that I had taken refuge in writing socially conscious and drab poetry.

## The Assembly Line

When my official appointment was announced, I had already served for a full year as a teacher-in-training, and therefore knew more or less what awaited me. My training period was served in a New York high school boasting a student body of upwards of five thousand. As a beginner, I taught no more than three classes a day. During the second term, the remaining periods were filled



with the following activities: standing guard in the lunch room; standing guard in the study hall; standing guard in the crowded school hallways; sitting guard in the home room; handing out and counting all the textbooks used in all classes in the English Department. In addition, a dramatic club was given over to my care, and there were various duties in connection with school assemblies and theatricals.

The day began and ended with punching the time clock, and lack of punctuality was no light matter. During the second term of my teacher-in-training year, I finished every day in a more or less exhausted state, but, despite this, I enjoyed the actual teaching hours, and really established rapport between myself and the students. I was very earnest about becoming a good teacher, and prepared and delivered the lessons with a high degree of enthusiasm. However, my most persistent memories of the period come from the other work that fell to my share. For close to one hour daily, I stood up in a steaming lunch room where about four hundred students milled about, buying and consuming their lunches and chatting and laughing. The roar was deafening. It was broken every now and then by the shattering of a glass or plate. When this happened, there was a moment of silence. One of the few traditions of the school was that the breaking of chinaware in the cafeteria was always the signal for a special kind of howl. One of the duties of the faculty member on guard was to shorten or at least tone down this howl. Often during the lunch room period, students would want to come up to talk about their problems, or ask for advice, or merely to chat with the faculty member. This was hardly possible because there were several infractions of school rules that had to be guarded against.

The study hall was actually the assembly hall of the school—a large auditorium seating a thousand people. Only about five hundred came for study at one time. They had to be watched with great care, because they were not supposed to talk, and the principal visited the auditorium very often. When a pupil was caught whispering to his neighbor, the only way of getting his attention and calling him to order, was by the use of a police whistle supplied to every teacher who had this assignment. There was little opportunity for reposeful study.

Every forty-five minutes a bell clanged over the whole school, announcing the changing of classes. Immediately doors burst open and the thousands of students streamed into the halls to go to the next classroom, to the gymnasium, to the lunch room, to the study hall, or to dash out of the building and home. Student monitors helped keep the lines of students in order. This was no mean task, since the halls were narrow, and it was difficult to hold back the forward rush of students trying to make the next class before the bell rang again. At certain strategic points a teacher was stationed. After a period in the jam-packed lunch room, a period in the study hall with five hundred students, even a few minutes in the midst of thousands of students pushing in two opposite directions was enough to make a young teacher wonder if Macy's was not a haven of peace after all.

### **Personality Production**

The atmosphere of high tension and breathless speed was heightened by the attitude of the head of the department in which I happened to be placed.

She was a woman in her early forties, ambitious, prepossessing, and full of what is known as "drive." She wanted everyone in her department to be stamped in her image—and kept insisting that all of "her" teachers must have *personality*. To have personality, I soon discovered, meant to exhibit drive, to dramatize the work, to keep all classes alive and on their toes at every moment. The possession of a quiet, persuasive manner would hardly qualify. I had several pleasant talks with my head of department. She was a good and tolerant woman, interested in the religious faiths of those who worked in her department. For herself, she explained, she was an agnostic, and could find no system of belief worthy of her credence. Her main tenets seemed to be the necessity of personality in the teacher, and the duty of such teachers to nurture personality in the students. It was her private revolt against years spent in a large and impersonal public high school. But her idea of personality was on the whole an external one—confined to having the students speak in clear voices, and not restrain themselves if they wanted to comment on some piece of literature or subject under discussion.

As I spent only a year in the department, I never got around to asking her what was the purpose of having teacher or student develop *personality*, or what was the final end of our work as teachers. Now that I think back on it, I am very sorry that I did not. But I suppose I was so busy watching out for the development of my own personality (along the prescribed lines, of course) that I would not have had the time to begin such a discussion.

After taking a written examination, an oral test for accepted speech, and an actual practical teaching test in front of an auditor from the board of education, my name was placed on an eligible list and I was given a regular appointment to the city school system of New York. I was constantly reminded by those still waiting for such an honor, of my life tenure, of automatic raises in salary, of the possibility of getting married and even having a baby without losing hold of my teaching job. In point of fact, I really felt that aside from the necessity of earning some money, teaching was really something spiritual, a chance to give meaning to my own life, and to help impress into good patterns the lives of the young. The repetitious emphasis on life tenure seemed to me rather macabre and tended to repel me.

### **Mechanization and Morals**

I started my regular teaching career in another school, not quite in the centre of New York City life. It was a smaller school than the one I had formerly served in, counting on its rolls only four thousand pupils. I was immediately given five classes of one grade, and handed at the same time a syllabus of what the classes had to know by the end of the term. There was no break between the classes—one followed right after the other. I had to teach the same subject to five classes for five months, and I also had to repeat myself five times a day. After tiring of my role as parrot, I arranged to switch the lessons so that I would teach the same items not more than two or three times a day. Even this was not too simple, because there were exams to be passed, and the same literature had to be taught within a certain period for mid-term and final exams. Nevertheless, the stimulus of young minds and the challenge of a new situation joined to make my first term an enjoyable experience.



During the second term I was given a little wider latitude and was allowed to teach two different terms of the same subject. During the third term my scope was extended to three different terms—still of the same subject. It was a rather rare occasion if a teacher of one subject, say English, was asked to teach Latin, French or History. Each teacher was licensed for one subject, or one branch of subjects; for example, mathematics. No teacher that I ever met took the liberty of submitting to a series of examinations in more than one subject. The main reason, I believe, was that the examinations were so long-drawn-out, and so extremely detailed and tedious.

In many respects the school was a model public high school. It was run with extreme efficiency—an efficiency that was not obtrusive and that made the wheels of a large institution turn quietly and gently. My fellow teachers were pleasant people, and I made many friends among them. Before long there was abundant proof, had I wanted any, that I was a success as a teacher. The principal gave me significant assignments in the conduct of the school and I found him a sympathetic, forward-looking and idealistic man. He broached the subject of my taking the examination for head of the department, confident of the fact that he had in me a reasonably ambitious, satisfied, high school teacher. By that time I knew I would never take any further examination in the public school system. A blight had fallen over my work as I analyzed it from day to day. Life tenure now took on the guise of a life sentence.

During the course of the day I came in contact with about two hundred and fifty students. They came to my class to study my subject, to pass an exam in it and to pass on to the next course. I think they enjoyed it because on the whole it was a pleasant subject, full of relationship to life and living. I often gave short quizzes to check on their continued application to the subject. Naturally, to their minds, the important thing was to pass the quiz—even if it meant getting some surreptitious aid from a neighbor. I shall never forget the reaction one day when I called off a quiz at the sight of cheating. I tried to impress my students with the relative unimportance of knowing an isolated fact in order to pass an examination, as against soiling one's character by cheating and lying.

"I will call off the test for today," I told the class. "Nothing I can teach you is as important as the true moral base of your characters. If you use my classroom to practise lying, even in a test, it would be better not to come at all." I digressed in such a way in all my classes, and felt that I made some headway. In general, the students made a point of stating that they were unprepared if they had not performed assignments, and after a while I began to have faith in the reasons they offered for such unpreparedness. When it came time to explain why it was necessary to maintain truthfulness, honor and other virtues, I was stumped. A teacher was not allowed to mention God in the classrooms. The only time the school ever came near to a mention of the Creator of our world was when a section of the Bible (usually, if not always, the Old Testament) was read aloud in the student assemblies, and when Christmas carols were sung in season.

### **A Cog Takes Cognizance**

I began to have a heavy heart when I thought of the students. They were good material—often full of idealism and of a search for meaning in their

lives. Outside of the regular class time, they would often come to me and share their problems and their dreams. I taught them, in general, when they were in the fourth and fifth terms of high school. I never taught the seniors, but I did direct the older students in extra-curricular activities. It was heart-breaking to see what happened to boys and girls between the fourth and eighth terms. At fifteen and sixteen, it was still possible to stress ideals and to have some sympathetic response from unsophisticated minds. They were still in many ways children, and had the unpremeditated responses of children. Most of them in the fourth and fifth terms still were under some parental supervision and were not too frequent movie-goers or dance addicts. By the seventh term, most of them were "in the groove." They had made a complete adjustment, to use the psychiatrist's term.

To what had they adjusted? To the mores of Hollywood; to the acceptance of jive and jitterbugging as the pivots of existence; to the absolute necessity of "belonging" and of keeping "queers," or "drips" out of the gang; to the frequent carrying (or so I was informed by the school medical department) of contraceptives. When young people were being vitiated right under our eyes, it was clearly the duty of teachers, if they really belonged to a profession, to take steps to save the human material with which they dealt day after day. The teachers of the public high school did not meet this responsibility. Not only were they not prepared to do anything, but even if they had been prepared and willing, the system would have effectively prevented them.

There was no cohesive relationship between the parents of the children, and the teachers who cared for the minds of the children during the day. Once a term, or sometimes only once a year, there was a "Parents' Night," when the teachers were on display, and such parents as were interested, came to the school and chatted about the progress of their offspring. In one evening, the teacher was expected to have a constructive word for as many tens or hundreds of parents as presented themselves. There was rarely if ever a follow-up of this relationship unless the student fell into serious disgrace.

My heart was no less heavy when I surveyed the teachers. They were deeply concerned with the standing of their pupils in Regents examinations, tests prepared in Albany to assure standardization of teaching in the public school system. They were also deeply concerned with the rating given them by the head of their department and by the principal of the school. Every so often they took a course in some graduate school because, in order to qualify for the salary increment, evidence had to be presented of a continued interest in intellectual growth and development through attendance at courses. Many of the teachers found interest outside their work that gave their lives meaning. A few of those I knew were artists; others found satisfaction in a happy home life to which they rushed at the end of the school day. Several were tied up with Communism. Others found surcease in travel. As soon as school broke up for the summer, they rushed off as far as they could reach and still return after Labor Day. Of my immediate circle, both men and women, there were those who in the space of a few summers had visited Guatamala, Colombia, Mexico, France, Finland, England, Sweden, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, and Russia. The most animated subject of conversation was always "What are you planning to do next summer?" Teachers who had visited certain countries



were always giving pointers to those who had not. They came back laden with snapshots and endless amateur movies of tourist havens. If all the feet of movie film taken of all these trips were placed end to end, they would undoubtedly make one reel.

What was most striking in a general way about the attitude of the teachers was that they were not finding satisfaction through their work, but rather through the leisure-time activities which their salaries were able to afford them; their travels, their movie-taking, their amateur theatricals, and play-going, their sports, their artistic pursuits, their political activities, and, in the case of the women, their clothes. Once I had made this analysis, I found daily proof that it was for the majority of teachers, a true one. I found that it was certainly true in my own case.

### **Labor Trouble**

After the exhilaration of serving for four terms as a young teacher with vigor and enthusiasm to spare, I began to wilt—to look at the syllabus as my natural enemy. Five times a day, a group of about forty students trooped into my room; five times a day they trooped out. There was the constant marking of papers, the constant keeping up with the syllabus so that my classes would not fall behind in final examinations. At formal and informal meetings of teachers, where one might expect a re-dedication to a naturally tiring task, one found no dedication in the first instance. Culture and the meaning of one's life should be related to one's work. I had expected that my work would help me to save my soul. When I discovered that I, too, was finding meaning for my life outside my work and that it became more and more impossible to integrate my working life and my leisure-time life, I made up my mind that, come what may, I had to leave the assembly-line job that teaching had turned out to be. Hundreds of souls passed by me daily. I was forbidden by the system to treat them as souls. My job was to teach them where to put the commas, and leave God out of the whole thing.

As I taught for the fifth and sixth terms, events in Europe were rushing to their climax of carnage and destruction. The youngsters who would suffer in this carnage were before me—they were without principles, without adequate bases of conduct, even for normal situations, not to mention crises. Many of them came from stable homes, where right principles were taught. The general absence of a re-statement of such principles caused them to leave high school less secure in basic moral standards than when they had entered. During the seventh term of my teaching life, I was placed in charge of a series of assemblies dealing with the values of citizenship and democracy. The whole series was rather frenziedly put together in response to an order. Steeped as I was in the tremendous reality of American democracy, and in the need for good citizenship as the bulwark of true democracy, I found little joy in the task. In such assemblies, as I remember there was one such assembly every week, we could not talk of democracy as stemming from the fact that God had created human beings as equals and as brothers, as co-heirs with Christ of His Kingdom; nor could we trace good citizenship back to obedience to the moral law.

The spiritual rewards which I had expected from the profession of education just were not there. At first, when I had quietly made up my mind, that for me as a Catholic and as a human being, work in an education factory with

its syllabi, its bells, its routine, and its cold methodicalness was unbearable, I had thought of finding another job. I had even thought of entering another profession. But after nearly four years of teaching, I was cured of compromise. I would throw myself on God's mercy, and go off to do a piece of study and work on social reform based on Catholic principles.

### On Strike

One day, in the eighth term of my teaching career, I walked into the principal's office and told him that I was leaving. I explained that teaching in a public high school was not my vocation, and that I felt that while I was still young I had to study Catholic social principles and the possibility of putting them into action. He accepted my resignation with the understanding, I felt, of one who had once had perhaps the same struggle. "I guess it is time for you to go off and be Joan of Arc," he said, "but if it does not work out, we'll have your position for you." In a week I walked out of the education factory. The reference to Joan of Arc, with her commands from God, and the certainty of her mission, was a hard blow to a young woman who was certain only of what was wrong, but in company with many others, was still groping rather blindly for what was right. Nevertheless, once the hand was on the plough there was no turning back. There was in store for me more than a year of isolation, loneliness and misunderstanding, and a time of need when my last penny was exhausted. It was only then that I was accepted for meaningful work in a Catholic cause at fifty dollars per month, a mite compared with what I would have received as a teacher.

### Mass Production

My story is not atypical, since the essential evils of the New York City public high schools are duplicated in every city of the United States. Even towns, where some of the evils are absent, run to the same educational pattern. Mr. and Mrs. Lynd, in *Middletown in Transition*, have fastened on one fundamental evil—that of bigness. They are talking of the high school set up in a town of no more than fifty thousand souls. Even a town of this size "... faces the necessity of more and more routinized procedures." They add ominously "... and there is no sector of our culture where the efficiency of large scale routines is capable of being more antithetical to the spirit of the social function to be performed than in education." In a further analysis of the factory system in education, they conclude: "And in the struggle between quantitative administrative efficiency and qualitative educational goals in an era of strain like the present, the big guns are all on the side of the heavily concentrated controls behind the former."

It is very easy to pose the problem of the "curse of bigness" in the school system of a democracy. In a democracy all the children must receive an education, and how can they receive it unless schools are big enough and there are enough of them? On this score, I am afraid there is no solution unless a new spirit informs our educational system. I agree with the Lynds; the big guns are behind quantitative administrative efficiency—the qualitative educational goals are hardly even being kept in sight.

The problem of teachers, however, is a problem on the spiritual plane, and one that cannot be rectified by organizing into teachers' unions. It is very



significant that organizations of teachers never strike out at fundamental wrongs. In their zeal to pass resolutions urging cost-of-living raises, the teachers never protest that all perfection is presumed to reside in the syllabus, and not in the teachers; never protest the progressive routinization of teaching procedures and of the entire school program.

### Higher Wages?

The teachers themselves might probably be the last to realize it, but what is really eating at their vitals is not lack of money, but lack of meaning in their work. As long as their work lacks spiritual depth and reality, they will need more and more money to indulge in travel, in leisure-time activities to make up for the routine emptiness of their days. Recently there was a strike of teachers in the town of Buffalo. All the teachers who received salaries went out on strike and interrupted the education of those entrusted to their care. The only teachers in Buffalo who remained on the job were those who received no salary but who found joy and peace in the cherishing and care of growing human souls. Thus it was that only the parochial grammar schools remained open to exercise their function.

It is now 1947. The carnage that we foresaw in the thirties has come and gone. Numbers of the boys who were my students were killed in battle; one has lost his mind after serving heroically in combat; one has committed suicide.

The crisis in the teaching world is more acute but has taken other forms. Now, instead of having long lists of prospective teachers and no positions, there is a serious teaching shortage. When there were other types of work to be done, work that allowed more freedom, and that possibly stressed less routinized procedures, the teachers trooped out of the classrooms. Life tenure did not have the same attraction in a time of business activity. No more terrible comment could be made on the spirit of our school system than this—that at the first opportunity to leave and find other life work, teachers left their posts, and young college graduates shunned the field of teaching. There is no doubt that the creative spark has largely been removed from the profession—either by the factory system of the overly large school, or by the unnatural supervision and restraints of teaching in a small country school. (The separate problems of one-room school houses cannot be covered here.)

There is a naive belief that the crisis in the teaching world, and the shortage of teachers, can be cured by higher salaries. The papers are filled with the day-to-day agitation by teachers' groups for higher salaries, cost-of-living raises. The only thing that has not been used as a rallying cry has been longer-than-life tenure. The teachers actually in the system are unhappy, and they are convinced that more money will make them happy. As I explained above, at least the money can be used to escape temporarily from a dull job. Such a solution is based on the purest *non sequitur*. The problem is a spiritual one, and the teachers are not going to make their lot a happier one by agitating for, and receiving, more money. At best, money can only be a palliative to a profession that needs a basic moral reorientation, in a school system that needs basic re-dedication.

## Future Business

I have not here indicated a wholesale solution—precisely because there is not a wholesale, widely applicable panacea. For Catholic teachers, however, there are solutions. Those Catholics who are forced at present to teach in schools that reduce spiritual work of training and preparing souls for living to a routinized, mechanical parroting of facts, can, in many cases, refuse to compromise further. They can refuse to be time-servers, because as Catholics they are responsible to their Father Who is in Heaven for every moment of time that they spend on earth. This means that they will leave the schools where they are not bringing young souls to God. There are many cases, of course, of men and women with families to support, where immediate egress is not possible; only the Lord can judge in these cases, where school systems are organized on a smaller, more human basis, where parents of all faiths are in contact with the school, and where a rounded progress for each student can at least be attempted.

## Solution or Dissolution

The main question at hand, however, is whether at this point of crisis on the American and world scene, compromise is any longer possible or justifiable.

Catholic teachers do not want to seize the public educational system, but at the same time some Catholics now feel that they cannot in a time of terrible change form part of a system that is not preparing the young to meet the crisis. Many teachers justify their continuance in the public high school system by the fact that after school hours they are able to break through the routine and really help on an individual basis those students who are searching for light. In this way Protestant teachers help Protestant children, Jewish teachers help Jewish children, Catholic teachers help Catholic children, agnostic teachers gather to themselves their own, and those whom they have brought to agnosticism, and Communist teachers consort with Communist young people. They feel that an honest job as a manual worker, as a trolley car conductor, is earning one's bread by the sweat of one's brow, but that giving silent assent to a system of education that damns and dams up the natural idealism of youth is at best a questionable way of saving one's soul.

This is not aimed to be a negative little diatribe suggesting that teachers walk out of public high schools and let the whole thing go to rot. There are still thousands upon thousands of children in these schools, and those who take it upon themselves to leave must immediately set about the work of reconstruction by Catholic means. These means, of course, are predicated upon a practise of poverty by the reformers, and would not include any country-club-like private schools for the rich, which besides their own faults are irrelevant to children now having to go to public schools. Catholic schools themselves have to a certain extent been visited by secular standards, and they often accept all or most of the wrong premises which have set our educational system off the road of truth. Even the crowning of the Virgin (which is done weekly during May on the well-cut lawns of our exclusive girls' schools) cannot in itself Catholicize these same institutions.



This record is the account of one who came to a point where further compromise with teaching in an education factory was impossible. She feels that there are many such—she also feels that time is running out.

There must be those Catholics who will find positive and Christian means to help solve a crisis which is at base spiritual.

SANDRA KELLEY

*New York City*

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Pagans brightly spread their knowledge,

More than Catholics out of college.

# The Thirst for Theology

We live in an intellectual hodge-podge, in a society that can't see the woods for the trees, but that has corps of "experts" out in the forest studying the bark, watching the moss grow, and counting the leaves. Suppose you were to go to one of these experts, or even to the president of one of the colleges at which he was trained, and ask a simple question such as: "Tell me, on what principle do you decide which trees to cut down and which to allow to grow?" or "What are woods for, and who made them?" or "What is the significance of the fact (as you have determined after a life study) that oak trees thirty years old average 46,501 leaves a season as compared with 65,834 in elm trees?" Suppose you were to ask these questions, and suppose you got in return nothing but puzzled looks. Would you not suppose you were in a nation of slightly crazed men?

What we need is not more detail, but some perspective; not yet more facts (as often as not erroneous ones), but some principles; we need some last ends, some first directives, some clear light, some *meaning*. We are thirsting, in a word, for theology. Theology is the science which will give us the last ends, the first principles, the meanings, the clarity and the directions which alone will make sense of the world and ourselves.

But theology is the one science which is generally withheld from us. This is due to the taint of liberalism, which has even affected Catholics. The liberal view is that it is not cricket to be told all the answers and to go on from there, and that it is positively unmanly to have any certainty. It is all right to *look* for the final answers, only you must do so blindfolded, and *never, never* find them. So the liberal world goes groping about, while we Catholics often neglect to use the fulness of our revealed truth out of mistaken deference to those who cannot accept revelation because they cannot figure it out themselves. Instead of theology we have been feeding on the insufficient food of philosophy, apologetics and devotionalism.

## The Inadequacy of Philosophy

Both theology and philosophy deal with the last things; the former as we know them in the blinding light of revelation, the latter as we can partially and inadequately discern them through the exercise of our own reason. They are the same last things in either case and therefore there is no incompatibility between the two sciences. Moreover, each is a legitimate and necessary science. It is only when philosophy, which is the lesser of the two, is over-emphasized at the expense of (or exclusion of) theology that a disorder is created.

The philosopher is a man lost in the dense, dark forest jungles who, if he is sufficiently clever and his mind is not warped by intellectual pride, may conceivably deduce the existence of the sun from the life of the trees around him, although, of course, he would know very little about the sun. The theologian, on the other hand (be he erudite or a simple Christian versed in the catechism) is a man seated on the mountain overlooking the forest, who has only to open his eyes to know far more than the most clever philosopher can ever deduce.



Philosophy is useful as auxiliary to theology; it is in no way a substitute for theology. When we are thirsting for the fullness of truth it is painful to be set back into an intellectual framework approximating that of the Greek, pre-Christian philosophers. Philosophy belongs to the natural order, while all our problems are in desperate need of supernatural light. Now that Christ has redeemed us it is impossible to rationalize all our problems as though there had been no Redemption. The more we try to do so, the more we come out with the wrong answers to our problems. Only so much can be deduced from the natural law, and among the things that cannot be deduced is the all-important fact of grace. Too much straining with the intellect in disregard of Faith, and you have a picture of the good life which includes the right to collective bargaining, to a living wage, good health, etc., etc., but which has no place for the folly of the Cross. We have no right to build a picture of life or of society confined to the natural law, to the philosophical level; to do so is, in effect, to postulate a this-worldly end for man. Such an approach completely misses the paradoxical nature of Christianity. If we had been able to figure out philosophically that we would have to die to ourselves in order to live, we would not have needed the light of Faith by which seeming contradictions such as this grow ever more luminous.

Naturalism is one of the great heresies of the day. The secular world is intent on bringing about the millenium within the natural sphere; we are always besought to lend help to schemes for replacing the *bad* natural with the *good* natural, but it is naturalism itself (not nature) which has to be replaced by a consideration of man's supernatural end, and the understanding and use of the supernatural gifts whereby it is to be obtained.

One frequently finds among Catholic college graduates this over-balance of philosophy. They will have spent a whole semester on the proofs for the existence of God (which was, in a sense, unnecessary for them, since they already believed in God by Faith), yet have no working knowledge at all of, say, God's Providence.

With the non-Catholic we tend to make the same error; to instruct him on his own natural level instead of introducing him to the fact of supernatural life. It is a rare non-Catholic who doesn't know that the Catholic Church forbids contraceptions (a not very inviting piece of knowledge from his point of view); but a surprising number, even of college graduates, have never even heard of the Blessed Sacrament.

### **The Obsolescence of Apologetics**

Apologetics, which is the science of explaining and defending the Faith, is in itself honorable, and has been very useful in its day. But it is now obsolescent. Nobody ever asks the questions to which apologetics is prepared to reply.

Apologetics characterizes a defensive church, and the Church is no longer defensive. The real enemies of the Church today are not muck-raking the Church's past, but are fabricating lies out of whole cloth. One is faced with the alternatives of ignoring them or denying them flatly. Meanwhile the majority of Americans are not so much enemies of as strangers to the Church.

THE CUSTOMER IS  
ALWAYS RIGHT!





WITH OR  
WITHOUT ?



Both Hitler and Stalin have developed to its highest point the art of the lie. So have their fellow-travelers in America. If you try to argue with them you will find yourself completely at a loss to establish a rational basis for discussion. Would you like to argue your interpretation of the facts of the case against their interpretation of the facts of the case? It is impossible, because you will not even be able to agree as to what are the facts of the case. There will be two sets of facts, the true set and theirs. This is what is happening with Russia in the U. N. and in the Big Four attempts at making a peace. You cannot argue with Russia about whether or not she ought to remove her troops from such and such a territory if she flatly denies having troops there.

The same sort of thing happens here, with people who are not necessarily Communist. Msgr. Sheen gave a talk on the godlessness of psychoanalysis. But now, it appears from indignant letters in the public press, that the psychoanalysts have been much maligned. Either they do not take after Freud, or else they and Freud both revere the human personality, are profoundly respectful of religion, etc., etc. You can't argue with them on that basis. And they will not argue with you on the basis of, say, setting forth their beliefs in regard to God, the human soul, or the meaning of happiness.

Our learned opponents are also indifferent to the law of contradiction. If you pointed out to them that they have contradicted themselves several times in the same conversation, they would only say, "What difference does that make?" With such men you do not argue.

Among the less learned you find, even where they have good will, that they are so ignorant and their minds are so warped by sentimentality, that here again the art of apologetics is wasted energy. Usually they just do not even ask the questions which the apologist is prepared to answer, and if they do, they do not mean it seriously. If someone says "You Catholics have bad popes," the best thing to do is to say, "Name three." Then, after they have failed to name even one, and mutter something about having heard about it somewhere, you can favor them with a comparison between our present holy Holy Father and all the statesmen of the western hemisphere rolled into one.

Mr. Sheed has often pointed out the futility of apologetics. You wear yourself out, as he says, proving that God exists, and then your audience walks away muttering, "so what." They do not even know what God means. In their darkness and despair of our godless society they have not even dreamed that there could be Someone Who loves them and cares one iota whether they die or live, whether they sin or behave themselves.

### **Devotionalism**

It is a dangerous thing to substitute devotionalism for a sound understanding of theology. Devotionalism is here used to mean feverish attendance at novenas, plus an accumulation of pious external devotions, which is fed not with the solid food of doctrine but with exhortations on the emotional level. The more energy with which devotionalism is pursued, the more dangerous it becomes. At best it degenerates into a gross sentimentality, at worst into madness.

When devotionalism concentrates, as it so easily can, on the charismatic aspects of religion, it can easily degenerate into superstition. It is not unusual



to find people, seemingly pious, who can converse endlessly about this or that mysterious or miraculous happening, yet who are not conspicuously virtuous and who evidently are devoid of a real interior life.

### **Theology for the Laity**

Since, then, there is such a general need for theology, what is the best way in which it can be supplied to the laity?

The important thing about theology for the laity is that they should not get a watered down course in seminary theology, much less a full course in seminary theology. The laity are not supposed to be diminutive theologians. To suppose so would be an error analogous to that which would have pious laity become little monks and nuns in the world, adopting conventual practice in so far as is possible. We are called to be saints, but the path to sanctity must be according to our states in life. We are all called to know God, but here again there are different approaches to the same Truth. To suppose otherwise is to feel that the clergy or religious are somehow more a part of the Church than are the laity. But we are all equally members of the same Body; some eyes, some ears, some hands.

The difference is one of function, and it is according to the difference of function between the clergy and the laity that theology should be differently learned by each.

The similarity between the clergy and the laity as regards theology is this, that it is the same truth in either case, and should in both cases, since it is truth about God, be auxiliary to one's sanctification. The difference between the two cases is that the clergy must learn theology also in order to teach it as such, whereas the laity learn it chiefly for practical application in their personal and daily lives. From this difference spring the chief characteristics of theology for the laity:

1. The laity will have what might be called the "psychological" approach to theology rather than approaching it from the internal order of the science itself. For the laity the *Summa Theologica* will be a reference book rather than a textbook. They will not start at the beginning of it, but wherever they can find principles which apply to the problem which they are considering. The Benziger publishing house is going to publish an English edition of the *Summa* with an index which will give detailed references to theological problems such as come up in different professions. It ought to be very useful.

Since the laity's interest in theology will be preeminently practical, they will not be under the necessity of remembering it so much as of absorbing it. The layman does not, for instance, have to remember all the daughters of sloth or pride, but only such as interfere with his own sanctification. As a matter of fact, one can informally observe that the laity are much more vulnerable to pride and to sterile pedantry in their theological knowledge than are clerical theologians.

2. It follows as a corollary to the above that the laity will always have to lean on the clergy for theological guidance. Those who claim the right to pick and choose the theology they will study, will never lose their dependence on

those who have the fulness of theology, nor is it fitting that they should, since the laity are dependent upon and subordinate to the clergy in the hierarchical structure of the Church. This does not mean that a lay person cannot study by himself (indeed he is obliged to study according to his state in life), but only that he must seek guidance from his confessor or an advisor from time to time, the more so if he is engaged in any public use of his theology.

3. It should be clearly understood that if the layman's theology is to be partial in regard to extension, it must nevertheless be deep. In fact, it is impossible to have too much understanding of the theological principles which apply to one's state in life. All too little is known about the Sacrament of Matrimony by many a husband and wife, whereas they ought continuously to grow, if not in study of it, surely in understanding of it. Catholic doctors have to know sharply the Church's teaching as it pertains to their profession, and in general this knowledge is readily available on the technical level, more generally ignored now on the broader level of professional obligations to charity, modesty, etc. The psychiatrist and psychologist, on the other hand, will need some intensive study of St. Thomas' treatise on man, not to mention books on ascetical and mystical theology. Theology pertaining to economics and the social order is still *terra incognita* for the most part, despite the papal encyclicals. It is our habit to seize upon the natural principles set forth by the popes in disregard of their theological admonitions, so ending up at one with the liberals and other curious bedfellows.

### Systems of Theology for the Laity

To say that the laity can pick and choose is not to suppose that their study of theology must be hit or miss, but only that it does not follow the scientific order of the theological science. It normally should follow an organic order of its own, and this it can do in several ways.

#### 1. *Liturgy*

The liturgy, which marks the rhythm of the life of the religious must also be a background influence in the life of the laity, teaching them the Church's great mysteries through the seasons of the Church year, and great spiritual principles through the psalms, for such of the laity who have time to read part or all of the Divine Office or one of the Little Offices. This is not to mention the Mass, which is the great teacher, but in another sense than we are here considering. But unless one has an exceptional lay vocation it is impossible to lead any sort of *full* liturgical life in an urban society geared to commercialism. What can be done with the liturgy in a closed, intensely Christian, rural community, is well exemplified by the Grail. On its farm in Loveland, Ohio, the Grail builds the whole pattern of its life around the liturgy, following not only the rhythm of the church year, but also using the blessings and sacramentals, as well as holding up saint after saint for emulation and admiration.

One thing especially obvious at the Grail is the richness of the liturgy, which provides far more than enough material with which to plan a community program. I once visited a Catholic camp where a well-meaning but inept attempt was made to provide not very well instructed children with a sense of Christian observance by mechanical rather than organic reference to the liturgy. So Christmas was "celebrated" in the first week of August, Easter in the second

week, and so on. The camp directors would have taught the children much more had they just relaxed and taken the church season as they found it, amplifying the day's liturgy by fitting drama and practices. Three days at the Grail would have been a revelation to them.

## 2. *Scripture*

Learning theology through scripture is learning it the way Christ first taught it; by parable, by admonition, by principle, and overwhelmingly by His own life. And so it is learned by the legions of those whose excellent custom it is to read a little every day from the Bible. The problem here is whether scripture can be used as a group instructional method. Its obvious use is, of course, in parish sermons. But apart from that, is it a suitable basis for a study club or college class?

There have been but few attempts, and most of them have not been notably successful. The difficulty is not so much in the scriptures as in finding a suitable priest director of the group or course. Owing to the rationalist attacks on the Bible, seminary courses in scripture have had to concentrate on the refutation of rationalist heresies, on sundry historical and technical studies valuable in themselves but not conducive to simplicity in approaching the word of God. What the layman needs to know is how to interpret the words of Christ in his own life.

Our danger today is not that we shall too literally interpret the scriptures (following the fundamentalist Protestants) but that we shall not take the Bible seriously enough, believing that when God says, for instance, that it is hard for rich people to be saved, that He means it is hard for rich people to be saved, and not that He means that it is hard for nasty rich people to be saved except in capitalistic America.

There are many new and useful helps to the study of scripture. One way and another they throw into unfamiliar perspective the words which have, through over-familiarity without meditation and practice, come to be taken for granted. Msgr. Knox's translations are very useful in this regard. So also is Fr. Stedman's little manual of daily readings, which is a re-arrangement of the order of the text.

## 3. *Catholic Action*

The genius of Catholic Action lies in the fact that it is organic. It is not so much something which has been invented, as something which has been discovered. The thing that is organic about Catholic Action is that it follows the natural process of reasoning: see, judge and act. Therefore it is, to oversimplify, a way of learning practical theology, with the immediate purpose of putting it to use. The "act" part of the inquiry technique is made possible because Catholic Action begins with the most obvious and pressing problems which confront its members, and therefore keeps the study in the realm of their own personal lives. It also automatically adjusts the dose to the capacity of the people concerned.

Catholic Action suggests the study group by way of contrast. The reason that study groups are over and over again failures is not because they do not



teach theology (and often more of it and more clearly than Catholic Action) but because their approach is not organic, and therefore the study either fails to interest people, or makes the students academic and their study unfruitful. A Catholic Action cell must be homogeneous, which guarantees common problems and allows for common action. Study groups are all too often not homogeneous, or if they are they do not take advantage of their homogeneity.

Another contrast is between the passivity of the study group and the active participation of those in Catholic Action. The activity of study groups is usually on the part of the clergy, and the passivity on the part of the laity. The result is that the outstanding fault of the Catholic laity is the lack of initiative.

Another familiar sin of study groups is their tendency to concentrate on other people's shortcomings. What good does it do housewives to study euthanasia? They might better be studying Christian home life. Meanwhile the doctors, who might well be studying euthanasia, are probably studying Communism. In fact, everyone is studying Communism, eyes averted from the sins of industrial-capitalism. When will we learn that the world problem has to be solved locally?

#### 4. *Theology in Higher Education*

How should theology be taught in college? It is already the consensus of opinion that it *should* be taught and a number of experiments are being made. I would like to suggest that the key is *not* advanced catechetical studies, or a diluted seminary course, but *integration*. There is such a tension already between secular courses of study and religion, even in Catholic colleges, that students have shown conspicuous resentment when God is mentioned in the so-called ordinary courses. Because of the separation of the departments of religion and other studies, students have lost the feeling that God is relevant to His creation. The synthesis must be restored. This cannot be done for the saying so, because there are not many teachers who can teach integrated courses, but it looks like the only answer, and therefore something will have to be done about it. An integrated college course is the only realistic way of teaching today.

How do you integrate religion with secular courses? It will not be done on a superficial level, but on the most profound level. Take history, for instance. Who since Bossuet has really attempted to show history as the unraveling of God's Providence? Yet is it not so? Is not the Incarnation the overwhelmingly most important of all *historical* events? It may even be well not to teach Church history separately any more in colleges, in the interests of showing that the Catholic Church is not a side issue in history, but the focal point of history. In order to do the integrating job in history we will need scholar-saints, who will take account of all the facts, yet always see the undiminished brilliance of Christ in His Church. If the Church really is Christ it will always look like Christ unless there are defects in the beholder, and this in the midst of recurrent crucifixions and betrayals. Catholic college graduates are more given to explaining how none of our sins really reflect on the Church than they are to the much more profound view that even our sins contribute mysteriously to God's greater glory and to that of His Church.

*Economics* is a subject which is crying for religious light. Garrigou-Lagrange, speaking of spiritual blindness, remarks that it makes people look for the explanation of our ills in economic cycles or over-production instead of seeing them truly as God's punishment upon us because large numbers of men have turned away from God as their last end and placed their last end in money or material prosperity. It is in this light that the economic system should be seen, as the invention of men who have turned away from God. It would be folly, therefore, to teach that economics is just the way things work, to which morality is irrelevant. Rather let us show that the law of supply and demand is no law whatever, and is in fact reversed in practice (we create demands so as to get rich by supplying them). Let the college students look clearly at the fact of almost universal economic ruin. Let them see the sharp contradiction which exists between economic endeavor and Christian ideals of detachment and mortification. Let them go to the roots of true economics to see that it is God Who gives real wealth and that our practices should be harmonious with His laws.

Even *English composition* would be considerably changed in an integrated college course. Writing is now a glamour profession at which you can get enormously rich if you have a facility of style which you are willing to put at the service of contentlessness. Catholic colleges have no honorable course but to turn their backs on current practice and teach writing as an apostolate, putting the major emphasis on what is being said rather than on superficialities of style.

If Catholic colleges are going to teach *Sociology* they will have to transform the usual contents of such a subject. If the descriptive part is really to be valid, it will be necessary, besides describing the sordid living conditions of the poor, to describe the sordid living conditions of the rich. Then it might become apparent that what is really terrible is universal materialism and loss of religion.

*Psychology* is another subject which will require drastic transformation. This should be seen as the study of the soul, taken from a certain point of view; showing the spiritual organism, and how it is meant to work and what happens when, as frequently now, its nature is violated.

And so also with the other courses. It does not so much matter what framework of teaching is employed (whether the tutorial system, or through great books, or through certain courses as at present), so long as the integration is there. The integration will first of all have to be in the teachers and then, if such a system is used, in the textbooks. One sign of returning health in education will be the re-emphasis on perfecting the *teacher*. The cursory suggestions given above for accomplishing the integration should not be taken to indicate that the process is obvious and easy, but that it is largely *terra incognita*, awaiting exploration in the directions indicated.

One cannot imagine that a Catholic college with a truly integrated curriculum would be accredited by a secular system of accreditation. That would be just as well, because that would spare the college the necessity of sending its teachers to schools where they would be taught useless and erroneous things. Maybe if someone would dare to take the lead, Catholics would soon be setting

the pace in educational matters. To date all the daring educational experiments have been made by non-Catholics and are doomed to failure despite the sincerity of the experimenters, because they lack the first principles.

Of the religion course which should be taught in addition to an integrated curriculum, there just is no space to treat here.

### *5. Retreats and Spiritual Direction*

The theology which is most important to everyone has been left until last. It is the theology which pertains directly to one's own sanctification. Apart from reading spiritual books on one's own, this theology is chiefly gained from spiritual direction and retreats. As things are at present both of these sources are somewhat wanting. It is hard to find a spiritual director who will seriously undertake to help one to become a saint. Even retreats are ordinarily on the cozy side. One gets a warm glow of satisfaction from having set aside a day or two for God, but the stimulation is largely emotional. The usual retreat is geared low, like the parish mission, for those in a state of mortal sin, or nearly so. The few theological retreats that are given, whether Catholic Action or other, are far more fruitful. These abound in real solid principles of what the spiritual life consists in, and how necessary it is for salvation and a fruitful life. Not a few people's lives have been completely transformed by such retreats.

### **The Sword of the Spirit**

One of the most hopeful signs in the Church is the growing army of laymen who are armed with the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. One finds them in offices, in factories, on street corners and at cocktail parties, explaining and defending the Faith. It is largely owing to theological instruction of one or another sort that this army is supplanting the mute, unapostolic Catholic laity of former days.

PETER MICHAELS

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### **THE REAL McCOY**

He maintains that Truth is subjective  
Yet he is extremely objective  
About the validity of the dollar.  
Only to greenbacks with the print  
Of the United States Mint  
Is he receptive.  
For one so insistent—  
Isn't he inconsistent?

CATHERINE CHRISTOPHER.



## Advice to Her Daughter

### On Starting to School

Now listen to mother, my darling.

Frequently make a scene.

As soon as you're disregarded,

Roll back your eyes and scream.

For we haven't the money to spend, dear.

And you're not a Madame Curie,

And the only way to know yourself

Is to act like a little fury.

For problem children get help, dear.

They're examined; they're probed; and they're tested.

You may be a genius in disguise!

At least you'll be fed and rested.

For life is geared to the "difficult."

Your behavior must never be formal.

For teachers find that they have no time,

For the child regarded as "normal."

*Catherine Walsh*

# Secular Education – Some Years After

I see by the papers that my alma mater is raising some many millions of dollars. A new library. A new dormitory. Some running expenses. It costs a lot to run Wellesley. I myself, or rather my father, paid \$1,000 a year for four years so that I could be educated there, and that was only about half what it cost the college to put me through my paces. If you add to that the cost of unlearning what they taught me—but you can't add that, because it was largely a spiritual cost.

It is not that I don't have a certain gratitude to my college. It is gratitude for what was intended to be kindness, but turned out to be unkindness; for seeming light that turned out to be darkness; for guidance by the halt and the blind.

But before I beat Wellesley's breast (because it has not yet itself received the grace to view its own sins with humility and horror), let me beat my own. If Wellesley is no credit to me, neither am I any credit to it. Nor was I its joy as an undergraduate. There were nobler, brighter, more diligent students at every hand. The seeds the college sowed were bad, but the ground they fell on was as bad or worse. Neither my home training nor my previous schooling nor my own virtue provided auspicious foundation on which to implant a higher education, so if the higher education wasn't so high after all, it is yet not fully responsible for the end product.

I did not study very hard at college, so I was guilty of sinning by sloth. If I had studied harder I would have learned more untruths. It has been useful for me to reflect on this dilemma, as I have seen it repeated a thousand times since, in my own life and in the lives of my friends. If your job is selling cheap, badly-made and unnecessary dresses, the better salesman you are the more you sin by deceit and by adding some more materialism to a materialistic world. But if you are a poor salesman and lacking in diligence, you take money under false pretenses. Or suppose it is your job to file correspondence about comic strips. The more seriously you take your job the more the fool you are; the less seriously you take it, so much the less do you deserve the salary which you think you must have in order to eat.

Now I see that it is the devil who has manoeuvred so many of us into such untenable positions, and that the only way out is God's way, which is to strike out in the direction of His righteousness, letting one's daily bread follow as it will. The answer to the Wellesley dilemma (had I known it) would have been to leave and to seek truth elsewhere. It was what I came to in the end, but only after a wasted youth, out of which only God could bring good.

## On the Credit Side

Wellesley has plenty of minor virtues. It is breathtakingly beautiful, both in its natural surroundings and in its semi-monastic architecture. It is not bourgeois. Wealth is neither paraded nor worshipped; luxurious comfort is not held up as an ideal. The college has, or had, a tradition of scholarship. We obtained our information at first hand (from Spinoza himself and not some-

one's comments on, or condensations of, Spinoza). There were no courses in such non-academic subjects as feeding babies or department-store buying. There was still a lingering admiration for Philosophy and Greek majors, despite the fact that they were a handful compared with the hordes of those majoring in Psychology (which was then largely a matter of memory work). No one ever dreamt of teaching shorthand, typing, or indeed any subject bearing on gainful employment, the contention being that Wellesley undertook to train the mind and that anyone who could manage somehow to scrape together money enough for four years of it could find enough more money for three months at a secretarial school.

Wellesley students came largely from upper middle class, professional families. They were healthy and intelligent, usually possessed of high humanitarian ideals. The college had a definite religious foundation, in consequence of which it attracted the daughters of Protestant missionaries, as well as a sprinkling of their Chinese and Japanese converts. In my day the college motto, "Non ministrari sed ministrare," was still jokingly translated, "Not to be ministers but to be ministers' wives," yet the religious strain had worn a bit thin and the joke was no longer very funny. Every year one girl was chosen as "most typical of Wellesley," which really meant that she represented the ideal rather than the typical. It was a very high ideal, naturally speaking: wholesome, self-possessed, extrovert and gracious; without affectation and with marked nobility of character. There were always a few Negro girls in school and no noticeable race prejudice. One of the student's parents used as a matter of course to entertain Negro friends at their Bronxville home, a fact which caused but little comment at college.

### **The Debit Account**

Despite these advantages, and many others, I was more nearly finished by than graduated from Wellesley. Four years left me with:

1. A vague but persistent feeling of superiority.
2. An intellectual curiosity run riot.
3. A militant immorality.
4. A set of wholly erroneous convictions.
5. No plans for the future.
6. A mind closed to the supernatural.
7. A profound ignorance of the purpose of life, the existence and nature of God, and all the rest of the really essential truths.
8. A growing despair (unacknowledged).

I cannot absolve my alma mater from responsibility for this state of affairs, even after due allowance is made for other contributing factors and my own exceeding lack of intellectual and moral virtue. I shall show in part how it came about.

### **Religion at Wellesley**

Wellesley is not so much a secular college as a sectarian college which has ceased to be Christian. It is of pious Protestant origin, as are most New England colleges, and its charter insists on the compulsory study of the Bible. In my day the clash between what the founder had in mind and the ultra-liberal religion of the faculty had reached an uncomfortable stage. Grace was still said



at meals, but chapel attendance was no longer compulsory; the personal lives of the teachers continued to follow the Christian pattern in which they had been reared, while they themselves directly or indirectly undermined the whole of Christian ethics in the classroom. The required study of the Bible was in process of being telescoped into insignificance, after having first been completely perverted.

Wellesley fell hook, line and sinker for the higher biblical critics. It was not until long afterwards that I discovered most of the higher critics had then already eaten their words, unbeknownst to Wellesley.

If you want to damn religion by indirection the thing to do is to study it from a literary point of view, or anthropologically, or historically. We studied the Bible historically. All I remember from one year on the Old Testament is that the Pentateuch was said to have been written by a number of different people designated by letters of the alphabet and that this was supposed to have invalidated it somehow. No mention that I recall was made of original sin, of the singular mission of the Jewish race, of the nobility of the patriarchs, of the foreshadowing character of Old Testament events, or of the messianic prophecies. One could have spent one's time more valuably in a Baptist Sunday school.

The New Testament course was Wellesley's masterpiece, on a par with the "Man and Nature" course at the University of Wisconsin in the production of atheists. We studied only the synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, as John was supposed to have been written by someone else at a far later date. All we heard of St. Paul in the required course was that he was the publicity agent responsible for the phenomenal spread of the teachings, not in themselves singular, of an obscure Jewish prophet named Jesus Christ.

The synoptic gospels were first reduced to St. Mark, as being (so they said) the earliest, most matter of fact, and therefore the most accurate. Mark does not describe Christ's birth: therefore there is nothing extraordinary about it. The miracles are then explained away; all diseases being reduced to epilepsy or neuroses, while such tales as the multiplication of the loaves and fishes became illustrations of the disciples' tendency to exaggerate. Christ's teachings were then twisted to support a theory of narrow Judaic preoccupation. By this time we had reached the triumphal entry of Palm Sunday (really so insignificant as to have caused no stir in Jerusalem and only seemingly important in retrospect). The Passion of Our Lord was considered the tragic end of blunderings and miscalculations, and the whole story ends abruptly as Christ dies in desolation on the Cross. And what of the Resurrection? It's a made-up story, later interpolated into the manuscripts.

A very pious Quakeress taught us these things. She opened every class with a prayer and frequently pointed to the nobility of Christian teaching, now that it was shorn of superstitious coating. Pretending to praise that which you have just destroyed is a common technique these days. You find it used in the popular expositions of the wonders of sex: three hundred pages of carnality, every fiftieth of which bows and says, "Love is so wonderful, especially married love." Its use is also flagrant in the standard obstetrical textbooks for nurses (Catholic and non-Catholic), which treat of woman as a biological exhibit, while carefully inserting periodic praise of motherhood.

For the most part Wellesley students succumbed to the enlightenment without protest. Who were we to argue with "the reading in the original Hebrew is . . .," and "all present-day scholars agree that . . . ." Besides, our previous religious training usually amounted to a dubious baptism, some Sunday school stories, a dash of sentimentality and a dose of adolescent idealism. I took part in what was probably the most famous protest. Our teacher had been explaining away the Last Supper. It was, of course, an uneventful celebration of the Jewish Passover, to which sentiment later attached significance. Someone had been so foolish in the morning class as to have defied this interpretation because it clashed with what she had always been taught and firmly believed. There was a recent convert to Catholicism in our class who arose in her defense, defying the whole historical method. I joined her, but only for the love of a good fight, since I was already an atheist. The brightest girl in school, a Jewess of amazing intelligence, chimed in and the uproar lasted until the teacher walked out white with rage, long after the closing bell had rung.

Nothing I learned at college stuck with me so long and clearly as did the fourteen reasons why Christ wasn't divine, according to the Gospel of St. Mark. In the end it took a large miracle of grace to get me to reconsider Christianity at all. I sometimes wonder if that convert's prayers were instrumental in getting me another chance. She talked to me a lot and even took me to Boston to Mass, but I was a million miles away and impenetrable. Meanwhile the Quakeress was revealing the heartening news that a Dutch scholar was on the brink of actually being able to *prove* that Christ had really lived. "You know," she said, "we really have no proof now, in case we are challenged."

### **Philosophy at Wellesley**

Now that the supernatural order had been explained away, I in my folly went on to the destruction of the natural order. I majored in Philosophy.

We studied every major philosopher from the pre-Socratics to John Dewey, except all Christian philosophers. It was as though human thought had been suspended during the 1900-year interval separating Aristotle and Descartes. Indeed, that was the precise opinion of the head of the Philosophy department, who put it thus: "When you are ready to give up thinking, become a Catholic."

Philosophy was taught cafeteria style. All the philosophers were presented to our view and no reason was given why one should be preferred to another. I didn't realize this at first and spent a miserable afternoon in consequence. The dean was conducting a seminar in modern philosophy. The very few students attracted to this study were sitting around the dean's dining room table while one student read a paper on John Dewey. The rest of them were taking copious notes so that on an examination they would be able to say: "John Dewey says so and so." I made the mistake of listening critically and discovered that Dewey's idea of the purpose of life was the pursuit of certain "ends" until they opened up new "ends," which would in time reveal still more "ends," etc. At the end of the reading I burst out with, "But that doesn't make sense!" There followed an argument, which was concluded by the dean's icy:

"I would hardly say that the greatest living philosopher is talking nonsense."

I was miserable all through tea and only in later years discovered how right I had been.

As I said earlier, we were scholarly at Wellesley and read our text in the original. A list of our philosophy books would read like an extract from the

Roman Index. Nothing pleases me more than to be forbidden ever again to share the intellectual writhings of post-Christian thinkers. I spent the better part of two weeks once in a beer parlor in Natick trying, with another girl, to make head or tail of Hegel. "Being is non-being, and the union of the two is becoming. . . ."

Still, the big things I learned in Philosophy came not so much from books as from teachers. Foremost was that there is no truth. This one was well hidden under verbiage about the love of truth and the nobility of searching for it; but we were never to find it. You have only to scratch any secular college graduate to find him infected with this same conviction; indeed it is held by the whole of secular society. The fact that she claims to know the truth is really the stock objection to the Catholic Church in America today, made by people who are so far from having disproved her claim that they actually do not know what the claims are, but only that they are to certainties and not to opinions, prejudices or possibilities.

The next important thing I learned in Philosophy was that there is no free will. I'm ashamed to have picked up this error because it was presented quite baldly and I could easily have used my brain in support of my common sense. Psychology and science students were persuaded more subtly, but the same determinism infected almost everybody. Its most popular form of expression was either the sentimental "You must not call these people bad, but sick," or the useful, "I couldn't help it because I was so badly brought up." One would be very mistaken to suppose that our theoretical determinism eliminated harsh judgments in the practical order.

I also picked up a certain working philosophy of life, a sort of courageous despair, amoral and rather on the sentimental side. It bore a much stronger resemblance to the Professor of Philosophy than to any of the philosophical systems we studied, most of which were in the purely speculative plane anyhow.

Lest anyone suppose that my Philosophy professor was a uniquely vicious man, let me hasten to assure them that he was by no means either vicious or singular. Indeed, it was because of his personal charm and exceeding kindness that his erroneous ideas were taken so to heart and did so much harm. He was a devout admirer of Alfred North Whitehead, whom I understand to have the same sort of soul-devastating effect on his Harvard students. The late Morris R. Cohen, famous Philosophy Professor at C.C.N.Y., who wrote "The Faith of a Liberal," is the exact counterpart of my teacher. Now there is another book out by a disciple of Professors Cohen and Whitehead. It is "Nature and Man," by Paul Weiss, who is Professor of Philosophy at Yale, and it follows the tortuous mental twists of Whitehead. I quote:

The past conditions the future as a limited but not yet determinate realm within which a range of occurrences can take place. A concrete course in time is necessary in order to determine and thereby realize the future. The result can be known in advance as a possibility, not as an actuality.

My personal conclusion on this type of thing has long been that these erudite gentlemen are trying in their intellectual pride, to invent the doctrine of God's Providence, but on the natural level.

It was not a pleasure to read of the death of Morris Cohen. I searched the obituary in vain for any sign that he had at last humbled himself before God.



## Contrasts

You would misunderstand the curious nature of our instruction if you did not take into account the example set us by our superiors, which was on the whole exemplary. So far as I knew the faculty, I admired them. One of my teachers practiced voluntary poverty. Another bore with great patience the arthritic pains with which she was racked. It would not at all surprise me to learn that many other faculty members led lives of heroic personal sacrifice.

Furthermore, there may have been Catholic influence making itself felt here and there. Vida Scudder, who was to me only an illustrious retired member of the faculty, was, as I have since discovered, the great American authority on St. Catherine of Siena. A curious saint to pre-occupy a non-Catholic. My art professor had influential ecclesiastical connections through which she was admitted to a view of the papal robes. How far beyond liturgical beauty her admiration for the Church extended I do not know. She may even have been trying to inculcate us with a pre-Raphaelite bias in art for all I managed to grasp of that subject. The college choir was partial to Gregorian Chant, which it sang without integral relation to the Sunday church service, of course. There were also a few Catholic teachers, mostly in the foreign language departments, with a consequent limited influence.

While the faculty continued their exemplary lives of noble pagan stoicism, or even of Catholic gropings, the student body took to heart their teachings and was noticeably degenerating. The students' favorite subject of private discussion was that of moral principles, which was argued endlessly. Under the circumstances the only argument for high moral principles was expediency, although the argument was given a hundred different ways. Expediency is the least strong deterrent of immorality and my informal observation was that it lost ground at an alarming rate.

At about this time the college took on a psychiatrist as advisor on student problems. Up until then the official attitude toward moral problems was non-existent, but could have been presumed to favor conventional Protestant moral standards. With psychiatry entered Freud and the all-explanatory sex. Rumors were that the psychiatrist was working to remove the inhibitions of the college girls.

## The Vocabulary of an Ex-Christian

The commonly accepted connotation of certain key words will furnish an excellent indication of the spiritual state which underlay the polite Protestant covering of our lives at Wellesley:

**SIN** was a word which was never used, except facetiously or historically. When we did in fact sin, we had "done something wrong" or "made a mistake." The idea of sin as an offense against God would not have occurred to most of us, as we found ourselves unable to conceive a "personal" God. It goes without saying that anything we found ourselves unable to conceive of therefore didn't exist.

**MODESTY**, in the usual Christian sense, was another word missing from our vocabulary. It is quite true, as I have since read in ecclesiastical writings, that those outside the Catholic faith are incapable of understanding the delicacy of conscience involved in the Christian virtue of modesty. We might, in an **extreme case**, have labelled a costume indecent, but we would only have mocked a dress to call it modest. Our campus clothes were pretty modest, as a matter of fact, but we were not modest. We had long since lost our sense of shame,

and nudity, whether informally in the dormitory or officially at the elaborate physical examinations presided over by the hygiene department, was more or less taken for granted.

SUPERNATURAL meant phony psychic phenomena, like crystal gazing. We were strict naturalists. If there was a higher intelligence than ours in the universe, it was of the same sort as ours. But generally we credited what higher powers there might be with having lower intelligences than ours: blind force, or energy, or chance. So much for God. As for angels, it never crossed our minds that they might really exist, fallen or otherwise.

All the words which are more or less related to the supernatural went by the board with it. Sacrament, grace, mystical: they were words which we seldom heard and to which we attached no meaning. "God is Love" was written conspicuously over the choir of the chapel and was given as the designation of a special autumn Sunday. Still, the idea of the theological virtue of charity was certainly lacking to almost all students.

HUMILITY was no virtue to us, whether in practice (for the most part) or in theory. It suggested to us a sort of base grovelling, a lack of the ever desirable self-confidence. Instead of humility we used the word modesty to indicate a person who doesn't brag about his attainments. We would have thought St. Theresa of Lisieux was lacking in modesty for saying "I was made for great things." We had never heard that humility does not involve the denial of good qualities but the acknowledgment of them as from God.

SANCTITY was an unfamiliar word, and certainly not an ideal of character. Our ideal characters were strictly on the natural plane of greatness. We admired Abraham Lincoln, Florence Nightingale and Walt Whitman, and we would have gone right along with those who say St. Teresa of Avila was a prize psychoneurotic. That is, we would have if we had ever heard of her.

Our ideals of conduct were on the natural level too. We thought it would be a wonderful thing to find a cure for cancer and to give money to reputable charities. We were scrupulously honest according to our conception of honesty. There was practically no cheating at college and theft was limited to an occasional kleptomaniac. Most of us came from families which wouldn't have dreamt of taking anything not theirs and would have been disgraced to accept relief if jobs could still be had scrubbing floors. Yet most of our fathers were responsibly involved in banking, corporations, railroads, insurance companies and Wall Street, places where (it is said) robbery on a large scale sometimes takes place. That curious clinging to what might be called "petty honesty" is still a conspicuous "virtue" of the graduates of our best colleges, especially those engaged in such businesses as publicity, radio and publishing. The Harvard graduate who assures us that X-AX is gentle and harmless, feels he preserves his integrity by freely admitting in the bosom of his closest friends that the stuff is probably poison.

Some of our natural ideals of conduct were far less attractive. We were coming around to the idea that no fair-minded wife would force her husband to continue living with her after he had lost his love (romantic lust) for her. We rather thought it would be unfeeling to bring children into a world not fully prepared (financially) to take care of them. There was even a growing admiration for the noble girl who secretly and silently has an abortion rather than force the man she loves to marry her for any other reason than pure romantic love (lust) at a time suited to his convenience.

## Results

So after four years we were turned out into a world which had, on the whole, even worse ideas than we had. It was a world desperately in need of salvation, but we were in no position to save it.

What happened to most of my friends was that they spent the next several years adjusting themselves downward to a world they couldn't lift up.

What's the point of studying English literature in order to spend your life reading unbelievably bad manuscripts for a publishing house with quite other than literary ambitions?

Why master higher mathematics in order to measure the capricious ups and downs of the stock market?

Had we disciplined our minds in order to do what was called "advertising research" but was really counting by ones?

Why had we bothered so with our brains if we were going to end up exhibiting our physical charms as Powers models?

The only thing ruthless commercialism had in common with our academic past was the irrelevancy of God to both types of life.

It is no wonder that none of my collegemates I know, now leads a joyous, purposeful life. Some have married, some not. Some have made money, some not. One killed herself. Most have reached a working compromise (not very stable) with circumstances as they found them.

Only a few remain actively tormented by the contrast between the mediocrity and materialism to which the world invites them, and the hollow in their hearts which aches for God.

M. B. W.

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At M.I.T. trigonometry  
Is advanced by men of vision.  
Original Sin and the pickle we're in,  
Has been solved by nuclear fission.



## BOOK REVIEWS

### On Making a Good Confession

**PARDON AND PEACE**  
By Alfred Wilson, C. P.  
Sheed & Ward.  
Price: \$2.50.

Here is a practical guide to the oft-times regarded as insuperable problem of giving an intelligent account of our sins. The impact of pagan principles on today's Christian is infinitely more subtle than in the days of

the pagan Roman Empire. The devil is the matinee idol of our times. Monsieur Verdoux playing fast and loose with morality and getting away with it! An unaccountable fluctuation in the price of a certain stock reveals a \$10,000 a year "man of distinction" has been playing fast and loose with the welfare of widows and orphans. A camera enthusiast atop the Empire State Building carefully adjusts his lenses to capture the suicide leap of a tortured soul with one leg up on the parapet a few feet away. The line at the Paramount starts forming at 7:00 A.M. in Times Square. The tabloid gives us this day our daily surfeit of violence. "One-fourth of the budget of New York State is spent in the care of mental cases," says the newspaper. "Peace and there is no peace."

Too often, the approach to Confession is to compile a large budget of sins without an appropriate list of resolutions to match. Small wonder that we become weighed down with the burden of sin and thereby prejudice our chances of achieving an intelligent purpose of amendment, and the peace of mind which flows from absolution. Behind this Jansenist fussing lurks a latent desire to be self-sufficient and a lack of confidence in the goodness of God.

One of the chief obstacles to our reception of the Sacrament of Penance in its fullness, according to Fr. Wilson, is the lack of spiritual reading in our lives. We spurn the wisdom of Sacred Scripture and the counsel of St. Ignatius, St. John of the Cross, and St. Teresa of Avila for the pontifications of ex-cab drivers turned human relations experts, or fortune-tellers, astrologers or erudite psychiatrists with little regard for common sense or morality.

This is a wonderful book for priests and lay people both. It is written in a familiar style, and is besides very entertaining. Fr. Wilson has furnished the faithful with a year's supply of funny stories.

*Pardon and Peace* is nothing if not comprehensive. It covers everything from the advantages of confession and what constitutes a sin, to confessional manners; along with lots of detail and sound advice about examining your conscience and getting rid of scruples. It is one of the most welcome Catholic books published in recent years. Please everyone buy a copy.

JOHN MURPHY

### Spiritually We Are Semites

**THE REDEMPTION OF ISRAEL**  
By John Friedman.  
Sheed & Ward.  
Price: \$2.00.

It's an interesting fact that the one problem most widespread and most commonplace today, is a problem that can only be explained on the highest level of penetrative thought. The enigma of the Jew is a religious mystery. He is everywhere, yet

nowhere is he at home. He is accused of the one thing of which he is least capable, a global political plot. He is criticized as capitalist and as communist, as mystic and materialist, as a culture-vulture and a boor. The nearer he achieves assimilation (as in Germany), the more marked is he for specific persecution. The more autonomous he remains (as in England), the less is he singled out as victim. His salvation lies in the place where he has been least likely to seek it, in that other branch of Israel, the Roman Catholic Church.

This book is a meaty nutshell-full of the Jewish historical mystery. It is a brief 122-page essay which scans the passage of the Jew from Abraham to Henri Bergson, all in the light of Divine Revelation. It logically subdivides this history into three epochs:

- a) The Egyptian Epoch
- b) The Babylonian Epoch
- c) The Universal Epoch

These epochs in turn are divided into three phases common to each:

- a) First Phase—Sin
- b) Second Phase—Punishment
- c) Third Phase—Salvation

Today, Mr. Friedman insists, finds the Jew more than halfway through the third and last phase of the final epoch. The material aspect of the regained Promised Land is the current return of the Jew to Palestine. Political Zionism, however, because it places the Nation before God (the sin of the Jew), is a factor which militates against salvation. The spiritual aspect of the regained Promised Land is found in those souls converted from Judaism to Catholicism, of which Dr. Friedman is one. Retaining their identities as Jews, these men, as new apostles of Christ, are the nucleus of a redeemed Israel. Re-grafted upon the Vine of Christ, they constitute the monumental answer to the enigma of the Jew.

All of which should give the Catholic who embraces an untenable anti-semitism something to *think* about. When there is no Jew and no Gentile but all one in Christ, the anti-semite will be a lonely man indeed.

ED WILLOCK

## Garments Rended

LEON BLOY  
PILGRIM OF THE ABSOLUTE  
Introduction by Jacques Maritain.  
Selections by Raissa Maritain.  
Pantheon. Price: \$3.50.

in their search for a *raison d'être*, a hungering of the soul for the Truth which is God—the Absolute. Leon Bloy's words will come as a startling shock to American Catholics. His deliberate self-humiliations and his denunciations of the smugness and complacency of his fellows permit of no compromise. He spent the greater part of his life in utter misery and destitution; yet he persisted in

Raissa Maritain and her husband, Jacques (who does the introduction) are in an excellent position to present these extracts from some of Bloy's writings. It was to him they turned in suicidal desperation

his relentless viewpoint. For example, in his indictment of the Modern Christians:

"You have no idols in your homes, that is to say, you don't burn incense before wooden or stone images while adoring them. You don't blaspheme. The Name of the Lord is so far from your thoughts that it would not even enter your heads to 'take it in vain.' On Sundays you do God the overwhelming favor of appearing in His Church. It's more the thing to do than anything else would be, it sets a good example for the servants, and after all it makes no difference one way or another. You honor your fathers and mothers in the sense that you don't, from sunrise to sunset, bespatter their faces with gobs of filth. You do not kill either with the sword or with poison. That would be displeasing to mankind and might serve to scare your customers away. And finally, you don't go in for too scandalous debauchery, you don't tell lies as big as mountains, you don't rob along the highways, where you can so easily be waylaid yourselves, nor do you rob banks, which are always so admirably guarded. So much for God's Commandments."

More than 300 passages are included in the book, and a very fine index gives their French sources.

JOY ANDERSON.

## The Problem of Love

### THE MIND AND HEART OF LOVE

By M. C. D'Arcy, S. J.

Henry Holt.

Price: \$3.50.

There are few men and women who have not had the experience of conflict between the impulse of selflessness and the drive of selfishness; few, also, are they who have had the time

or the ability to face in a speculative manner the problem of these conflicting loves or to attempt to solve it. The problem may be stated simply in this fashion: is there a way to reconcile the apparently contradictory impulses of selflessness and selfishness? or must one or the other conquer and cast out the other?

Fr. D'Arcy has given much thought to the problem and this work gives us the fruit of his investigations. There are two purposes in the work that should be distinguished. There is, first, what might be called the documentation of the problem, the accumulation of the evidence of its existence. This purpose has been attained most brilliantly by the author. The reader is made keenly aware of the existence of the two loves, their pervading presence throughout the universe on every level of being, and the difficulties their conflicting tendencies give rise to.

The second purpose of the book is the presentation of a solution to the problem of love. That Fr. D'Arcy has attained his second purpose is questionable. In seeking the solution, the author was aided by intellectual contact with several others who were engaged in a similar pursuit. Much of the book is devoted to an exposition of their opinions; the author, then, shows how his own thought was developed through a criticism of these opinions. This is an ancient



and fruitful method of enquiry. Some of the authors discussed are: de Rougemont (*Passion and Society*), Nygren (*Eros and Agape*), Rousselot (*Probleme de l'Amour au Moyen Age*), and Hunter Guthrie (*Introduction au Probleme de l'Histoire de la Philosophie*).

Fr. D'Arcy leans heavily on the contribution of Hunter Guthrie, although he brings in elements of Rousselot's theory that are, in fact, incompatible with Guthrie's thesis. The one element of Rousselot's explanation that would ultimately solve the problem, the Thomistic theory of the relation of the whole and the part, is passed over lightly on the authority of Gilson, who chose to ignore St. Thomas' clear indication of his own adherence to this solution and suggested that the doctrine of men and angels as images of God was the key to the solution, as though there were a choice between the two.

It might seem that the whole problem is of little practical value and of interest only to philosophers. This is far from true; the problem has urgent practical applications, especially in the spiritual life and in political life. Recent controversies over the relation of the individual to the common good, the human person to society, are fundamentally resolvable into this question of love. There is, in fact, urgent need for a clear solution to the problem of love which would manifest the possibility of reconciling the apparently contradictory impulses of love. Fr. D'Arcy has contributed much toward a clarification of the problem and its solution.

JAMES M. EGAN, O.P.

## The Story of Fatima

### OUR LADY OF LIGHT

Translated from the French of  
Chanoine C. Barthas and  
Pere G. Da Fonseca, S.J.  
Bruce. Price: \$2.50.

For the third time in less than a hundred years, our Blessed Mother revealed herself on earth to repeat substantially the same message to the world. "MEN MUST CORRECT THEIR FAULTS AND ASK PARDON FOR THEIR SINS. IN ORDER THAT THEY NO LONGER OFFEND OUR LORD, WHO IS ALREADY TOO MUCH OFFENDED . . . CONTINUE EVERY DAY TO SAY THE BEADS." Her intermediaries in each case at La Salette, Lourdes, and in our own century, at Fatima, Portugal, were all humble peasant children. With increasing urgency she has insisted that the world repent for its sins, particularly for sins of the flesh.

This book with its authoritative description should help increase the already spreading devotion to our Lady of Fatima. Portugal has already shown the modern world, had it only eyes to see the truth, the blessings which come to a nation that returns to love and devotion to Christ and Mary. Within twenty-five years it has been transformed from a chaotic, revolution-torn, persecution-ridden country, to a peaceful, stable nation imbued with the spirit of Catholicism in its social, economic, and political life.

It remains to each of us individually to accept in our own lives the message of Fatima, and do penance for ourselves and for our fellows.

DOROTHY WILLOCK

## The Green Revolution

### RECLAMATION OF INDEPENDENCE

By Willis Dwight Nutting.

Berliner & Lanigan,

Price: \$3.00.

The man who was beating himself on the head with a hammer, stopped to remark to his friend, "If you have nothing but negative criticism to offer, please keep

quiet." A few moments later he was carried away screaming. This lunatic is brother to the less violent individual who counters every criticism of the present social order with the same remark. In both their tortured minds is embedded the notion that some inexorable force, law, or authority demands that they keep on doing what they're doing. They both fail to realize that if they but stopped, things would show a rather startling improvement. The reasons for stopping our self-inflicted economic mayhem, the manner of stopping, and the positive moves that should occupy our resultant sabbath, are the subject of this book.

Mr. Nutting advocates a Green Revolution as a means toward regaining the human liberty we have lost under the present System, and as the sole means of forestalling the otherwise inevitable state of tyranny toward which we move. I have seldom seen the case for a decentralist, agrarian and craft economy, so logically and unemotionally developed. He first points out to us very convincingly that specialization in methods of work has created an abnormal interdependence. We are all consumers dependent not upon a man or upon a class, but upon a System. So involved has this interdependence become, that no one can state with certainty just who or what controls it. The rich as well as the poor are slaves to these wheels within wheels. They are equally dependent for their supper upon that mad magic that puts the food on our tables, and the clothes on our backs. Consequently:

... the proper function of the System is our greatest concern. It must work or we perish. Our instinct of self-preservation demands that we make it work. Nothing else is important. Our existence on this earth depends on it. Nothing else—personal preferences, the hopes, ambitions and plans of individuals, *and even human rights*—must take second place, for what are preferences, or hopes or rights if we are not alive to enjoy them?

This state of affairs, Mr. Nutting insists, does not make for human freedom. The organization of one class against the other fails to advance human freedom one iota, and he gives as evidence the strongly organized unionism of Germany and Italy offering but slight resistance to dictatorship when it arose. My own evidence is the present seeking after legislation by our American labor unions, which if granted, would as Mr. Belloc prophesied make one class *under law* subservient to the other. To perpetuate the System, the American worker at present would gladly accept well-paid servility to freedom, by their own testimony.

At great length, the author suggests ways and means to bring about a quiet revolution which would be characterized by more and more people becoming less dependent upon the System and more dependent upon their own skill of hand, or, at least, dependent upon a small local cooperating community. This is the Green Revolution similar in most details with that advocated by Chesterton, Belloc, McNabb, Maurin, Borsodi, and company. It would be essentially a land and crafts movement.

Agreeing wholeheartedly with Mr. Nutting's diagnosis and treatment of the social problem, I must say his optimism is greater than mine. Not because he hopes to see results, for so do I, but because he implies that the impetus for such a movement can be forthcoming from men's innate desire for human freedom. I do not believe that this is strong enough today to hope for any such heroic manifestation. Human freedom is an expression without meaning until qualified by an answer to the question, "Freedom to do what?" Without the proper motives and admirable desires of Mr. Nutting, many men might consider his ultimate community a deprivation of that licence they now enjoy as slaves. His optimism is the same as that of which our founding fathers were guilty, and resulted in their idealism hardly outliving themselves.

Apart from Christianity as it is interpreted and lived out by the Church of Christ, men will find themselves ill-equipped to achieve or maintain any social order compatible with dignified freedom for the person, for this civic liberty can only come as by-product to a Christian religious life. The self-denial, altruism, and hopefulness necessary to make the Green Revolution possible could only be the natural consequence of supernatural virtue. Man must first come to realize that he is ultimately neither dependent upon a System, nor his own productivity, but upon the Providence of God. Freedom thus sought would be the kind of freedom which spreads itself lavishly among common brothers under the room of a Beneficent Father, where neither ambition for one's own ends, nor envy for another man's possessions can get a foothold. We need not wait upon the day when all men are of this persuasion but certainly the first heroic steps can only be taken by men Calvary-bound.

Mr. Nutting's Green Revolution integrated with 1947 Christianity is the social dish for our famished age. The Revolution, however, will not be an end, but an effect.

*Reclamation of Independence* is a valuable contribution to those libraries which we hope will soon be discarded as less attractively fertile than compost heaps. Until that day the book itself will give you some delight as a thing well done. It is the first from Messrs. Berliner & Lanigan and the beautiful format leads us to believe that these gentlemen share Mr. Nutting's enthusiasm for craft skillfully executed. Copies may be ordered direct from the publishers.

EDWARD WILLOCK

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## TO OUR READERS

If you like INTEGRITY and know of others who might like it too, will you send us their names (as many of you have done already), so we can send them our announcement? You'll find a form on the reverse side for your convenience.

Many thanks,

JOHN MURPHY



## BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED

**THE HOLY EUCHARIST** by Rev. Jose Guadalupe Trevino. Bruce \$2.50.

A devotional and doctrinal treatise of fifteen chapters on the Blessed Sacrament with a short but helpful doctrinal appendix.

**OPERATION UNIVERSITY**, Edited by Martin McLaughlin and Henry Briefs. National Catholic Youth Council \$1.00.

A report and analysis of the World Student Congress held in Prague last summer, the first post-war Pax Romana International Congress, and the December meeting of the Chicago Student Conference.

**MY IDEAL—JESUS, SON OF MARY** by E. Neubert, S. M.  
Maryhurst Press, Kirkwood, Mo. (pamphlet)

This little handbook of devotion to the Blessed Mother isn't just another pious exercise in her honor. It amounts to a way of life for those who adopt it wholeheartedly. It has been followed by priests and religious for many years. Recently the Popes have recommended its adoption by lay people, especially those engaged in the apostolate. The author says "My Ideal" is a simplified popular version of the teaching of William Joseph Chaminade, founder of the Society of Mary, on Mary's part in our redemption. Basically, it is the True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary first outlined by Bl. Grignon de Montfort, whose canonization will take place on July 20 of this year.

**CATHOLIC ACTION IN THE MYSTICAL BODY** by Tromp

Berliner and Lanigan, Nevada City, California. 15c.

**HIS WILL IS OUR PEACE** by Gerald Vann, O.P. Sheed and Ward \$1.25.

Tension within ourselves diminishes as attention to God augments. Peace is not the absence of trouble, interior or exterior, but the identification of wills, of our will with God's. Father Vann would teach us the art of surrendering to Him gracefully and of living constantly in His presence.

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**The FRIENDSHIP HOUSE** summer school of Catholic Interracial Techniques will hold two sessions this year at St. Joseph's Farm, Marathon City, Wisconsin, July 6 to 19 and July 27 to August 9. Write James Quinlan, at the farm, for details.

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## **C. T. FIRST, THEN C. A.**

Undoubtedly Catholic Action is what the world needs, but not all action by Catholics is Catholic Action: to get the real thing you must begin with Catholic thought.

All readers of *Integrity*, we presume, know this. Indeed anyone who stops to think must realize that the diagnosis has to come before the treatment.

## **WHAT AILS MANKIND**

*by* GUSTAVE THIBON

**\$1.75**

is a diagnosis of the sickness of the world, and suggests what remedies should be applied.

## **ESSAYS IN RECONSTRUCTION**

*edited by* DOM RALPH RUSSELL, O.S.B.

**\$2.00**

consists of essays by five Benedictines and four laymen and gives more light on the same subject, as well as constructive ideas on what can be done. It will not do to despise this book because it is written from the English point of view any more than it will do to neglect the one above because it is written by a Frenchman. The world's troubles can't be seen from too many points of view, provided all are Catholic. We suggest you read these two books and

## **DESIGNS FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING**

*by* PETER MICHAELS

**\$2.50**

This last book is an attempt, says the author to "do the impossible—blue-print a Christian social order," an order which, as he says, can only be brought about by a spiritual revolution. It is a disturbing book, because obviously we *could* try out some of the author's ideas—there is nothing in the world to prevent us, except lack of courage.

Any of these books can be ordered through your book store or from us.

**SHEED & WARD - 63 Fifth Avenue, New York 3**

IN OUR DAY AND AGE  
UNENLIGHTENED  
HEROISM IS NOT ENOUGH.  
PIUS XI

